

# The Olive Branch

January 22, 2020

## Sunday Readings

A publication of Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota

January 26, 2020

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 9:1-4

Psalm 27:1, 4-9

I Corinthians 1:10-18

Matthew 4:12-23

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February 2, 2020

Presentation of Our Lord

Malachi 3:1-4

Psalm 84

Hebrews 2:14-18

Luke 2:22-40

## Accent on Worship

*Vicar Bristol Reading*

*"...Jesus withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea..." (Matthew 4:12-13)*

This Sunday's Gospel reading situates Jesus in a specific place: the small fishing town of Capernaum, in the region of Galilee in northern Israel. One year ago, in January 2019, I was touring the Holy Land with a group from seminary, and we stopped to visit "Capernaum by the sea."

Capernaum is a fascinating and worthwhile archeological site for many reasons, but I found myself most drawn to that "sea." Capernaum sits on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, technically a large freshwater lake, that provides critical resources to this arid, rain-scarce region. Listening to its waves and touching its water, I felt deeply connected to Jesus. I pondered that Jesus had walked on this very same shoreline (not to mention on the lake itself!) and fished in these very same waters.

Scientifically speaking, this is actually true. Our planet's hydrologic cycle continually mixes and recycles the same water over and over again. So, in a sense, the water on earth now is the same water that was on the earth in the first century when Jesus lived; we're drinking, bathing, swimming, and baptizing with the same ancient water.

Martin Luther picked up on this idea in the 16th century, although he probably didn't understand the finite nature of the hydrologic cycle. In his famous baptismal prayer, which is still echoed in our liturgy today, he wrote: "Almighty and eternal God... Through the Baptism in the Jordan of Your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, You sanctified and instituted all waters to be a blessed flood, and a lavish washing away of sin." Since we just observed commemoration of Jesus' baptism on January 12, it's a fitting time to remember Luther's idea that Jesus' baptism blessed all water, in all places and times. The same water that flowed through the Jordan River then is still around, mixed up with other water and flowing somewhere else in our world today.

*(continued on page 2)*

## Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

When I touch the water in the baptismal font to make the sign of the cross, swim in one of Minnesota's many beautiful lakes, or advocate for legislation that will protect waterways, I remember all this. All water is holy water, and I share that holy water with everyone who ever came before me, including Jesus, just as I share it with everyone who will come after me.

- Vicar Bristol Reading

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## Save the Date: February 9 – Taste of India

Thanks to the Paul Nixdorf's display talents, you can now get an inside picture of the Bethania Team's recent trip to India. On Sunday, February 9, the team will share what they saw and learned and whom they met. Join them during the education hour and then again as we all share a Taste of India--Redux feast in the Undercroft after the second liturgy. Many of you have already committed to cooking for this celebration--thank you!

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## A Wedding Invitation

Members and friends of Mount Olive are invited to witness the joyous occasion of the marriage of Kristie Hennig and Ralph Baumgartner on Sunday, Feb. 16. The ceremony will happen as a part of the regular 9:30 am worship service at Christ Lutheran Church on Capitol Hill, 105 W. University Ave. in Saint Paul. Parking is available on the north side of the church building, including in the lots owned by the State of Minnesota.

In addition, from 2-5 p.m. that day, there is an open house in honor of the newlyweds in the Gathering Space of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 700 S. Snelling Ave. in Saint Paul. Everyone is invited. Ralph and Kristie request that no gifts be given to them, but rather guests to consider giving to Project Minnesota León / Nicaragua, or Seeds of Hope / El Salvador.

All are welcome.

## New Members to be Received

New members will be received into membership at Mount Olive at the 10:45 liturgy on February 16. If you are interested in becoming a member of this faith community, please contact Pr. Crippen or Vicar Reading.

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## EcoFaith Network "Power-Up"

Members of ELCA congregations the Minneapolis Area Synod will gather to engage in conversation around creation care, identify common environmental issues to galvanize around, and move forward with collective, concrete action. Saturday, February 8, 2020  
10:00 am - 2:00 pm  
Site: St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
1701 W. Shakopee Road in  
Bloomington.

Contact Vicar Reading if you are interested in attending.

Visit <https://mpls-synod.org/event/ecofaith-network-power-up-determining-our-collective-path-forward/> for more information.

## Calendar

### Wednesday, January 22

- 10:00 am Staff meeting  
5:30 pm Children's Choir supper  
6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsals  
7:00 pm Y2 Confirmation; Cantorei rehearsal  
8:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

### Sunday, January 26- Third Sunday after Epiphany

- 8:00 am Holy Eucharist  
9:30 am Sunday Church School / Adult Forum  
10:45 am Holy Eucharist

### Monday, January 27

- 4-6 pm National Lutheran Choir Board meeting  
7:00 pm Worship Committee  
7:00 pm Vicar committee meeting  
7:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

### Tuesday, January 28

- Noon Bible Study  
4-8 pm Diaper Depot  
7:00 pm National Lutheran Choir rehearsal

### Wednesday, January 29

- 10:00 am Staff meeting  
5:30 pm Children's Choir supper  
6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsals  
7:00 pm Y2 Confirmation; Cantorei rehearsal  
8:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

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## Attention Electronic Givers!

If your contributions to Mount Olive are handled electronically (via Vanco Services), and you wish to have your offering amount updated for 2020, please send a note to Cha at the church office with your updated amount. It's important that your request is in some sort of written form, in order that proper documentation for the change is on record.

## Book Discussion

On February 8, the Book Discussion Group will discuss *The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt's New World*, by Andrea Wulf, and for March 14, *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout.

All readers welcome!

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## Needed: Winter Accessories

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.

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## A Hymn Festival!

A hymn festival, led by The National Lutheran Choir and David Cherwien, will be held at Bethlehem Lutheran Church (4100 Lyndale Ave. S., Mpls.) on Sunday, January 26, at 4:00 p.m. A brief pre-concert conversation, hosted by Steve Staruch, will begin at 3:30 p.m.

This hymn festival is FREE and open to the public - all are welcome!

## Upcoming Adult Forums

**January 26:** "Seeing Gender Diversity in Scripture," presented by Austen Hartke

Have you ever heard someone say that the Bible condemns transgender people? Have you ever wondered if it's true? Let's journey through scripture, taking a look at some of those verses, and digging into the stories of some of scripture's gender non-conformers.

Austen Hartke is the author of *Transforming: The Bible and the Lives of Transgender Christians*, a book on theology and personal narratives published by Westminster John Knox Press in 2018. Austen is a graduate of Luther Seminary's Master of Arts program in Old Testament/Hebrew Bible Studies, and is the winner of the 2014 John Milton Prize in Old Testament Writing from the same institution. Austen is a 2019 Bush Foundation Fellow, and is currently researching the use of online ministry as support for gender-expansive Christians. As a transgender person of faith, Austen's greatest passion is helping other trans and gender-non-conforming people see themselves in scripture.

**February 2:** "Welcoming Our Transgender Siblings," presented by Austen Hartke

While labels like "gay" and "lesbian" are now pretty familiar to most people, words like "nonbinary," "gender-expansive," or "agender" can still feel strange and mysterious. Who are our transgender siblings, and how can we create a faith community that loves and affirms them? Come hear more about what we can do, as individuals, and as churches.

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## Year-End Contribution Statements

Year end statements of contributions for calendar year 2019 are available for pick now. Please pick yours up while you are here!

If you have any questions about your statement, please contact Cha at the church office.

## National Lutheran Choir Winter Concert: So Much to Sing About!

We sing because there is so much to sing about, and singing is the deepest way to embody the sacred story we share. We sing hymns of praise, psalms of unity and adoration, laments of sorrow, refrains of joy, and more. Join the National Lutheran Choir and Artistic Director David Cherwien for an eclectic program featuring choral works by Felix Mendelssohn, Ola Gjeilo, and Ralph Vaughan Williams set alongside new arrangements of familiar tunes, including Kenneth Dake's "Sweet Hour of Prayer." All will be invited to join in the singing of hymns – one of the great treasures of the church.

**Sunday, February 16 @ 4pm**  
**St. Philip the Deacon Lutheran Church**  
**17205 County Road 6, Plymouth, MN 55447**

Tickets: Adults and Seniors \$28 | Students and Children FREE | Discounts available for groups of 10 or more. For tickets and more information, please visit [NLCA.com](http://NLCA.com) or call (612) 722-2301

## Neighborhood Ministries Partner of the Month:

### *Our Saviour's Housing, a program of Our Saviour's Community Services*

See complete information about Our Saviour's Housing in the January 8 issue of *The Olive Branch*, posted on the kiosk in the West Assembly Area, or by visiting <https://oscs-mn.org/our-saviours-housing/>.

## Augustana Care Center Closing Liturgy January 29

As some may have read in the *StarTribune*, Augustana Care Center, where many Mount Olive members have lived and died, and where others of us have long and strong ties, is being closed after being sold. (Former Mount Olive vicar Erik Doughty is chaplain at the care center.) The closing is only of the skilled nursing care building, not the apartments or other buildings on that campus.

There will be a liturgy for the closing of Augustana Care Center on Wednesday, January 29, at 2:30 p.m. at the care center. Bishop Patricial Lull of the St. Paul Area Synod and Bishop Ann Svennungsen of our Minneapolis Area Synod will participate in this liturgy. All are welcome.

## Night Songs

*University Lutheran Church of Hope, 601 13<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE, Minneapolis*

*February 13, 7-8 pm*

Gather with us in the darkened sanctuary under stunning projections of the night sky in the rafters. This 60-minute program weaves together music, poetry, and cosmic imagery. This year's program brings in themes of climate justice and human impact on the earth and our surroundings. Featuring music from Hope Choir, a mass choir comprised of local singers and friends, a string quartet from the U, and U of M a cappella group VocalU.

This is a free, family-friendly event. A free-will offering will be collected at the door to benefit Interfaith Power & Light. Seating is provided, but there will also be open space for those who want to bring pillows and blankets to sit/lie on the floor.

## A Note of Thanks

Many thanks to all those people who helped transform our sanctuary from Advent to Christmas to Epiphany:

**Ordering trees, wreaths, garlands:** Gary Pagel; **Putting up Christmas trees:** Eric and Steve Manuel; **Putting up wreaths, garlands:** Kandi Jo Benson Nelson, Brad Nelson, Gary Pagel, Mark Pipkorn, Carol Austermann, David Molvick, Steve Manuel; **Placing Chrismons on trees:** Andrew Andersen, Rod and Connie Olson, Donn and Bonnie McLellan, James Bargmann, Tim Pipkorn, Gene Janssen, Carol Austermann, Carol Martinson, Mike Rader, Katherine Hanson, Gary Pagel; **Poinsettias:** Naomi Peterson; **Outdoor planters:** Gary Pagel; **Aisle candleholders:** Art Halbardier; **Sconces:** Tom Olsen; **Moravian Epiphany star:** Brad Nelson; **Nativity creches display:** Paul Nixdorf and Johnny Vegesna; **Hauling away trees and greenery:** Andy Bipes. If we have left out anyone's name, a thousand apologies and thank you for your work!

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## Spiritual Direction and Study Group

Long-time friend of Mount Olive, Teresa Rothausen, is considering leading a spiritual direction and study group during February, March, and April at Mount Olive. The group would read parts of the edited volume *Transformative Lutheran Theologies: Feminist, Womanist, and Mujerista Perspectives* (2010; Fortress Press, Minneapolis).

Teresa is a professor at the University of St. Thomas and a Spiritual Director holding a graduate certificate in Spiritual Direction from St. Catherine University. She spent last year studying at Harvard Divinity School. Depending on input from whoever may be interested, the group meetings may be: (a) every other or every 3 weeks, (b) part book discussion, (c) part personal spiritual direction, and (d) part discussing implications for our worship at Mount Olive.

If you are interested in joining this circle, please send an email to Teresa at [wiserleadership@gmail.com](mailto:wiserleadership@gmail.com), indicating your available and preferred days of the week and times of the day for meetings.

# 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](http://www.mountolivechurch.org)

## Staff

Pastor - *Joseph Crippen*

Cantor - *David Cherwien*

Vicar - *Bristol Reading*

Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry

- *Jim Bargmann*

Administrative Assistant - *Cha Posz*

Sexton - *James Wilkes*

*Mount Olive is a Reconciling in Christ  
congregation.*



## Welcome Back, James

It's great to have **Sexton James Wilkes** back full time, not only for the sake of his position, but to have him present as a member of the Mount Olive community. James' return restores consistency to the care of our building and property, but also restores his humor and kindness to so many - so dearly missed while he was home recovering. Thanks were extended last week to the many volunteers who filled in during his absence. Since his return, one individual has been doing yeoman service to help him - **Mark Pipkorn**.

Mark has been at the church, early and late, on the meanest, snowiest days to help clear the sidewalks and steps - one of the heaviest and most demanding tasks of the Sexton. He's done it cheerfully and with little public notice - since those are hours when few of us are present. Give both these gentlemen a hearty "thank you" for their service as you have an opportunity!



- *Art Halbardier, Property Director*