



Sunday Readings

May 10, 2020
Fifth Sunday of Easter
 Acts 7:55-60
 Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16
 1 Peter 2:2-10
 John 14:1-14

May 17, 2020
Sixth Sunday of Easter
 Acts 17:22-31
 Psalm 66:8-20
 1 Peter 3:13-22
 John 14:15-21

At this time and until further notice, all worship services and activities are suspended, in the interests of the health of our members, our neighborhood, and the world around us.

The Olive Branch

May 6, 2020

A publication of Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Accent on Worship

Cantor David Cherwien

How long, O Lord?

How long? This is our question, isn't it?

Who knows? Some are saying it could be a while. Others are saying we'll be "opening up" soon. Some are of the mind that some brilliant minds will find a way to come up with a vaccine and all this caution can be gone. It's very easy to go down the rabbit hole of all the things we cannot do right now. Why is it always so easy to approach any issue from the negative?

So, what CAN we do? Can God be worshipped? Can we pray? Can we hear the Word of God? Can we sing? Can we grow as people of God? Can we love each other? Can we share our abundance for those with deeper need?

The answer to all of these is YES! We CAN move from fear about what someone might bring us (the virus) to what CAN we bring to the care and good of others? What CAN bring us strength to make that bold switch?

Consider how important "liturgical life" is to you. What are you able to do without our being able to physically gather? Maintaining rhythm is something very important to musicians, as it is for most of us. Certainly, rhythm and routine are critical to our cat - amazingly consistent and accurate. It is for us too.

continued on page 2

Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

We CAN be sure Sunday is indeed different and not just another day to sleep in. We can change up our routines to be very distinctly Sunday. For me, it's getting up a little earlier, even though there would be the option of sleeping later since I don't have to even leave the house. I turn on Pipedreams (on MPR from 6 to 8 am) so the sounds of organ music already frame a mindset of this being Sunday as I make coffee and have breakfast.

Mount Olive provides us with materials for a focused time of observing the Lord's Day in our homes. These are meant to keep the rhythm of that focused time: Acknowledging that we are children of God, perhaps in a world desperate for a kinder, more compassionate way. We give praise to our Creator, saying "Yes! We ARE grateful for creation and declare ourselves to be your people!" We settle down to hear the word: Hebrew scripture, psalm, letter of Paul, and words of Jesus (Gospel). Then we are indeed able to be comforted, and perhaps challenged by that Word through the sermon - custom fit for THAT DAY. This drives us to prayer, then back into "the world." Is this focused time and the rhythm of its activities critical? To me it actually is very critical, even if I'm not "working" as I would be under normal circumstances. This focused time helps shape our week - helping us see everything through a different lens. Being a child of God is something even a tiny virus can't take away. Ever.

We can't gather to sing, but we CAN still sing, and can be grateful for those times when we could do so together and look forward to the time when we can again. Until then, we can stay in touch with that powerful aspect of our life together through the recordings provided from years past. We can sing along. We can notice the words again. We can hear what's going on in the improvisational introduction, drawing us deeper into that text. We CAN savor that we are no strangers to strong four-part singing, or even in canon - unaccompanied. Who knew the "shut-ins" these recordings were made for would be ourselves?

In our house, after this liturgy at home time we then have a distinct meal - something we wouldn't normally have for lunch - pancakes and sausage or something decadent.

There is another critically important thing we CAN do. The depictions of the disciples in the book of Acts describes them pooling all income and distributing it equally. Wow. We're not that extreme (maybe we should be) but for us now separated and not reminded by our weekly gathering, we CAN step up our financial support. Especially to Mount Olive, but where else? You might be finding the same thing we are: the stay-at-home time has brought with it less spending. Some are receiving government assistance, even though their income has NOT changed. We CAN direct those dollars to something or some people who do need it. We CAN step up our giving, and make sure that our commitments of support are up to date, perhaps exceeded.

There's a lot we CAN do in this time of great "cannots." There certainly are a lot of things we cannot do, but I find it encouraging to stay on the CAN side of the wall. How about you?

- Cantor David Cherwien

Calling all letter writers!

We would like to start writing "Happy Baptismal Birthday" cards to our members as those important milestones occur. If you would be willing to write 3-4 notes per week, please contact Lora Dundek by phone at 651-645-6636, or by email to lhdundek@usfamily.net. Mount Olive will provide all supplies and postage and a list of people to write to. Thanks in advance!

Regular link to the Tuesday Noon Bible Study: copy and keep

The link for the Tuesday noon Bible study will be the same every week. Copy this text and print it off or keep it on your desk for easy reference each week.

To join from your computer, tablet or smartphone:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/179693565>

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: +1 (646) 749-3112

Access Code: 179-693-565

New to GoToMeeting? Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/179693565>

Congregation Meeting and Elections During COVID-19 Pandemic

Our Mount Olive constitution requires a congregational meeting by the end of April at which the election of officers and some Vestry members is conducted. Clearly meeting in person has not been possible in this time of pandemic and stay-at-home orders and will not be in the foreseeable future. However, the elections are necessary to make sure that the congregation's mission and business can continue to be conducted properly and with-out interruption.

To that end, Vestry has adopted an alternative process for this extraordinary time in our history. The slate of nominees prepared by the Nominating Committee will be published in the next two issues of *The Olive Branch* and attached to the Sunday worship email to fulfill our constitution's requirement for notice.

Voting members may nominate additional candidates by email to welcome@mountolivechurch.org, or by calling the Church office (612-827-5919) and leaving a message in Administrative Assistant Cha Posz's voice mailbox recommending a name or names for these positions. These nominations must be submitted by May 20. The Nominating Committee will contact these additional nominees for their consent to be added to the slate.

All voting members of the Church will then receive a letter explaining the voting process and a postcard ballot to be returned to the church no later than June 5.

If you have any questions regarding this congregational election, please leave a voice message with Administrative Assistant Cha Posz asking for a return call or send an email to welcome@mountolivechurch.org. She will make sure the appropriate person responds to you.

This is the slate of candidates prepared by the Nominating Committee:

President	Gretchen Campbell-Johnson	1-year term
Vice President	Mark Ruff	1-year term
Secretary	Gene Janssen	1-year term
Treasurer	Doug Parish	1-year term
Education Director	Katie Krueger	1-year term
Stewardship Director	Consuelo Gutierrez-Crosby	3-year term
Missions Director	Judy Hinck	3-year term
Worship Director	Dan Hellerich	3-year term
Property Director	Carol Martinson	1-year term

Mount Olive in the community

Mount Olive in the Community seeks to raise up those things the people of Mount Olive are doing in their own neighborhoods while participating in the StayHomeMN programs initiated in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mount Olive in the Community provides our faith community an opportunity to see examples of what the Church looks like out in the world.

The Church is not defined by a building or even a congregation; it is important to see each of the neighborhoods where we live as our “neighborhood ministry.” This is always true - but acutely so now. We hope this inspires you to come to a fuller realization of yourself as the Church in your neighborhoods and take action to care for those around you.

Please send us stories, pictures, and ideas. We want and need your involvement.

Sharing: The people of Mount Olive being the Church

A group of volunteers from Mount Olive teamed with staff members to check in on some of our regular visitors - people who are a very real part of our community, but not members in a formal sense. One family expressed concern about their ability to pay for their rent and utilities and afford groceries while the primary income earner was not working. Mount Olive members provided connections to organizations, including Mount Olive, that help with rent and utility payments and purchased groceries for the family.

Inspiration: Ideas about how to connect to neighbors and community members

- Offer to pray for your neighbors.
- Rally people at your local supermarket to buy extra groceries for those in need.
- If you live in an apartment, lower a basket by rope filled with comfort items for the homeless.
- Offer to do the shopping (including the pharmacy) for your elderly neighbors.
- For apartment dwellers, launch a balcony choir or exercise class.

Education: Resources that can help as you care for others

For those of you in Hennepin County, there is a wonderful resource for finding help called Waypoint. If a neighbor expresses need for services beyond what you feel you can provide, you can let them know about this site: <https://gis.hennepin.us/waypoint/> Alternatively, if you encounter a neighbor or friend with needs that you do not know how to meet, please contact me or give them this number: (612) 216-8637. This is a special number set up for responding to assistance requests (financial and otherwise) remotely. Texting is preferred, but calling is acceptable too.

- Jim Bargmann, Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry, neighborhood@mountolivechurch.org



COVID-19 and Bethania

Even as COVID-19 affects us here in the US, it also affects our mission partners around the world. As we said last week, the Missions Committee will try to keep you updated.

The mission with whom we have had the longest on-going relationship is Bethania Kids in India. Four of the Bethania facilities are residential homes. The children in Dayvu, Grace, and Shalom homes were instructed to go home or to relatives where possible. It was decided to keep the boys at Angel Home since most do not have families or would be on the streets without nutrition. The

many other Bethania facilities and programs such as day care and women's empowerment have also had to suspend their operations.

India has been in lockdown since March 24 and that will continue until at least May 18. All travel by air and rail is prohibited, with schools, restaurants and places of worship also remaining shut nationally. In spite of those measures, India reported 2,600 new cases on Sunday. While most of the COVID-19 cases so far have been in the larger cities in the north, Grace Home for Girls in Nagercoil, Tamil Nadu, was tapped by the Indian government for possible use as a "COVID-19 ward." Currently that area of Tamil Nadu is tagged as a "red zone" due to the rising number of cases

Your prayers are requested for the Bethania Kids children who are affected by the current quarantine orders from the Indian government and are not able to be with Bethania during this time, for the staff and caregivers, and for the children's parents, already poor, and many of whom are daily wage laborers and are now unable work due to the quarantine.

Can You Help?

From our missionary partner in Chile, Karen Anderson.

Dear Friends,

As most of you know, the ELCA called all global mission personnel back to the states in March because of the COVID10 pandemic. It was an excruciating decision but here we are with my two adult daughters quarantining at our family cabin (owned jointly by 9 families). I continue to work full-time with the EPES staff, we meet by zoom weekly and accompany community health teams working on a range of issues in their communities.

I am writing now because I need help finding a place to rent from the end of May until at least October 1st (approx). The ELCA said they will be evaluating each situation case by case as to when we can return to our countries of service. Given the winter weather in Chile and the possibility that it will exacerbate the spread of COVID, I don't imagine I will be able to return until spring arrives in Santiago. So...I am looking for any leads to renting a 2-3 bedroom house or apartment that would have to be furnished. I hope to find something in Minneapolis.

If you know of any leads for Karen, please email missions@mountolivechurch.org.

Stewardship Update

Thank you everyone for your compassion and commitment to the family that is Mount Olive.

We want to share an update on our management of incoming gifts. As you know, our staff are working from home and volunteer work has shifted to virtual forums. We want to ensure their safety and the safety of our members in complying with the Governor's stay at home order. We all know the importance of this in minimizing the spread of the virus.

We are working on a plan for ensuring the health and safety of our counters and being stewards of the gifts being so generously shared. Our process requires multiple people to be handling gifts and being in physical proximity of one another. We have been working on a monthly basis for managing the counting and depositing of gifts to minimize contact. We have made deposits for March and April. We appreciate the contributions that are being sent in and ask for your patience. This is crucial in our ability to carry out our ministry and will impact our ability to do so in the coming months. Thank you for your continued support.

We want to make the process easy and convenient for you. If you are okay with the delay in the deposit posting to your account, please feel free to continue sending your offering via postmail. If you would like, we have alternative methods for giving that you may want to consider:

- **Bill Pay:** You can set up a regular offering through your bank by calling and talking to someone or by logging in online. You tell your bank how much to send, how often and they will electronically transfer the amount. This service is most often free of charge and already used by many at Mount Olive.
- **Electronic Funds Transfer:** Set up a regular deduction from your bank account through the church's existing account with Vanco Services. Contact the church office to set this up and a form will be mailed or emailed to you (or use the link in the cover page of this *Olive Branch* email). Complete the form and send it back to the church office either by US mail or via email.
- **Mount Olive Website:** You can donate by credit card through the church website. Visit www.mountolivechurch.org, go the very bottom of the home page and a "Donate" link is on the left. This method is good for one time donations rather than recurring donations as the fees charged to Mount Olive per transaction are higher than the other two methods.

This has not been an easy time for us to say the least. We have been challenged in so many ways. One reassurance has been that God is with us and continues to show up in expected and unexpected ways. As Vicar Bristol said in a recent *Olive Branch*, "the loving shepherd will be present with [us] throughout the journey, no matter what." Our Mount Olive family is here for one other as well. We are grateful for the multiple ways generosity is shown daily from our Mount Olive community.

With Gratitude,
Consuelo Gutierrez-Crosby
Stewardship Director

Mount Olive Lutheran Church

3045 Chicago Avenue South

Minneapolis, MN 55407

*A congregation of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

Sunday Eucharist:
Temporarily suspended

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*

Sexton - *James Wilkes*

*Mount Olive is a Reconciling in Christ
congregation.*

Communication in the time of Covid-19

A group of about 25 people, coordinated by Lora Dundek, have been working hard to make sure that everyone in the congregation gets at least one phone call or email during this "stay home" time. And another group, overseen by Katie Krueger-McCuen, have agreed to run errands and get groceries for those who need it. If you have any need for food, supplies, or just for a friendly voice, call the church office and leave a message in Cha's voice mail (ext. 10), and either Lora and Katie will arrange for a helpful person to contact you. This is how we are church together!

Attention Mount Olive Worship Assistants!

Though we cannot gather for worship right now I know everyone is longing for the day when we are together again. So we live in hope and plan for the future. The Servant Schedule for the 3rd quarter of 2020 (July - September) will be published at the beginning of June 2020. The deadline for submitting requests is May 15, 2020.

Please email your requests to peggyrf70@gmail.com.