

Sunday Readings

May 17, 2020
Sixth Sunday of Easter

Acts 17:22-31

Psalm 66:8-20

1 Peter 3:13-22

John 14:15-21

May 24, 2020
Seventh Sunday of Easter

Acts 1:6-14

Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35

1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11

John 17:1-11

At this time, all worship services, ministries, and activities are being conducted virtually, not by gathering, in the interests of the health of our members, our neighborhood, and the world around us.

The Olive Branch

May 13, 2020

A publication of Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Accent on Worship

Jim Bargmann

Two issues ago, Vicar Reading skillfully outlined the many ways our current situation is, in a very real way, exile, much as was experienced by the people of Israel.

I have found myself considering her powerful words many times over the last two weeks. Repeatedly, my thoughts seem to revolve around two questions. What can we learn in our time of exile? And, what will life be like when we come out of exile?

To be clear, the vast majority of experts in epidemiology and other related fields do not expect a return from where we are now to anything we might recognize as normal life anytime soon. I am not advocating for a sooner than wise return to "normal" life, whatever that might look like. The health and safety of our sisters and brothers is paramount in my mind to any other concerns.

But I do not think it is too soon for us to consider what shape we may want life to take when we do return. We can start taking steps now to make those things a reality to avoid being thrown back into non-exile life devoid of intentionality.

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Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

This practice, too, like the lessons of exile, have a strong Biblical basis. The book of Nehemiah (a short ten chapter read I would commend to all of you) describes the process undertaken by Nehemiah to rebuild the city of Jerusalem and the process of defining what life would look like for this post-exile community.

Here is a short summary of some of the key things Nehemiah and those in this small community did that I feel we can learn from:

- Nehemiah began the process with prayer, offering confession for those ways the community had gone against God's own instructions and commands. He also sought God's wisdom.
- He worked to gain the support of those in authority - secular leaders friendly to the cause of the community.
- They worked together. Nehemiah didn't set out to rebuild all on his own, he led a team of like-minded individuals to accomplish what he sought to do. And each worked according to their training, skills, and God-given gifts.
- They dealt respectfully and prayerfully, but also decisively, with opposition from both inside and outside the community. One of the most pointed exchanges comes in chapter 5 where some of the powerful and wealthier members of the community wanted to go back, literally, to business as usual, and Nehemiah stood up for the powerless, stating, "The thing that you are doing is not good" and established a new path forward for this small remnant community.
- They set out a vision for their new life, aligning their life with God's law, and separating themselves from the model of life before exile.

Friends, we have an opportunity for a new life, post-exile. What will that life look like? We have an opportunity not only to decide that question for ourselves, but to influence the decisions among our families, our friends, our neighborhoods, our city, state, and yes, country.

I hope we do not go back to the way things were before. Please join me in using this time to stand up for the hungry and the homeless. We have too many resources to let people live in hunger and without homes. Please join me in using this time to stand up for equality. The disparities for people of color and our indigenous sisters and brothers in terms of health, income, and education are unacceptable. Please join me in using this time to stand up for those workers we have now come to see as essential so that they are compensated fairly with not only pay but health and time-off benefits. Please join me in using this time to stand up for a world where immigrants are welcomed and appreciated as the assets they are to our communities and country. Please join me in using this time to stand up our world and fight against the things we are doing to change our climate. Please join me in using this time to stand up for families who are under so much pressure to over schedule and do more and more and more.

There will be life after exile. And will we have the opportunity to shape that life when the time comes. Please join me in stand up for those things and people that matter so that life after looks better than life before.

- Jim Bargmann

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.

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

No new projects were shared this week. If you have been involved in “being the church” in the past couple weeks and have not submitted a story or pictures, please do. You can choose to remain anonymous as others have done.

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

- Pray in general for those infected, those at risk, and for decision makers.
- Deliver gifts (hampers, toilet paper bouquets, cookies) to your neighbors’ doorsteps.
- Send notes of encouragement to governmental leaders. They are dealing with lots of conflicting opinions about their work and could use encouragement in what they are doing.

Education: Resources that can help as you care for others

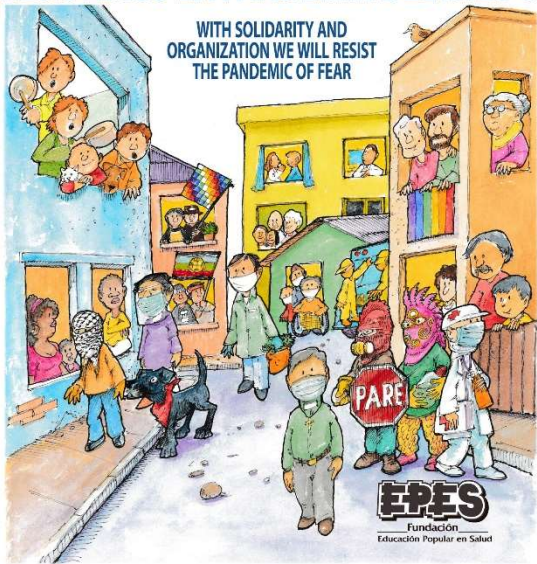
For those of you in Hennepin County, there is a wonderful resource for finding help called Waypoint. If a neighbor expresses need for services beyond what you feel you can provide, you can let them know about this site: <https://gis.hennepin.us/waypoint/> Alternatively, if you encounter a neighbor or 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

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!

CON SOLIDARIDAD Y ORGANIZACIÓN RESISTIMOS LA PANDEMIA DEL MIEDO



COVID 19 and E.P.E.S.- Chile

Missionary Karen Anderson has returned to the United States from Chile, but the work of E.P.E.S. in Chile continues. As Karen reports, "As of April 19 there were over 9000 cases of COVID 19 and 100 deaths. Poorer communities are being hit the hardest. During these trying and complicated times, the EPES staff continues to be committed to working for justice, dignity and health. 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. We have been working with the national network to stop violence against women, the national Health for All Network, and have been developing educational materials that we share through whatsapp and social media. We are running a class today on bread baking via youtube for all the health promoters who are at home during very strict quarantine (you need a police permission to go out). We are

also working closely with the Haitian immigrant community in El Bosque, producing informational and educational materials in Creole. You are all in my thoughts and prayers and I would be grateful if you would continue to include my family, the EPES staff, the health promoters, the people of Chile and the Global Mission staff of the ELCA in your prayers. Much love and blessings, Karen Anderson

As noted below, Karen and her family are seeking a furnished 2- bedroom house or apartment to rent for her time in the United States, probably for the next three-six months. If you have any leads for her, please let us know at missions@mountolivechurch.org/

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

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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!