



The Olive Branch

May 27, 2020

Sunday Readings

May 31, 2020

Day of Pentecost

Acts 2:1-21

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

1 Corinthians 12:3b-13

John 20:19-23

June 7, 2020

The Holy Trinity

Numbers 11:24-30

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

Acts 2:1-21

John 20:19-23

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.

A publication of Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Accent on Worship

Jim Bargmann

Our Prayer of the Day for this upcoming Sunday, the Day of Pentecost, reads like this:

O God, on this day you open the hearts of your faithful people by sending into us you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for Holy Spirit. Direct us by the light of that Spirit, that we may have a right judgment in all things and rejoice at all times in your peace, through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

As I read this, there were three phrases that stood out to me, and I would commend them to you as well.

Direct us by the light of that Spirit...

When I was in college, I spent a summer working as a camp counselor in Colorado. On the edge of our camp property was a mountain called Cedar Mountain. We frequently took our campers up to the top of Cedar Mountain, and because of this, I and the other staff members were very familiar with the trail, so much so that by a third of the way through the summer, we could walk the trail to the top of the mountain at night. And we did. The view of the stars from Cedar Mountain is like nothing else in the world. Because we knew the trail so well and because we wanted our eyes to adjust to the dark, we would do the trip without artificial light. I remember, though, that for the first few night hikes of the summer, we would still occasionally turn on a flashlight to locate trail markers and landmarks along the way.

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Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

"There's the turn, over there!" was a common phrase. This is the image I have of the Spirit directing us. Our life experiences and God's presence through those experiences mean we often know the way - and God walks with us. But often, we come upon something new, unfamiliar. In those times, we can pray this prayer, and expect that the Holy Spirit will direct us by her light to locate the next signpost, the next turn, the next action.

...that we may have a right judgment in all things...

Once directed by the Spirit's light, she doesn't then leave us on the trail, "Good luck - have fun!" Instead, the guidance continues. The Spirit's leading isn't simply about pointing out the path we should be on, but rather, she continues to work through our hearts and minds, giving us the wisdom and judgement we need to do "God's good and gracious will" as Martin Luther writes. Luther continues this instruction, writing about the third petition of the Lord's Prayer, saying, that "God's good and gracious will comes about without our prayer, but we ask in this prayer that it may also come in and among us." I think these two thoughts go beautifully hand in hand. God, by the Spirit, leads us to know and do God's will - to have right judgement in all things.

...and rejoice at all times in your peace.

Philippians 4 includes this blessing, "And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." This short little phrase says so much about the peace that God provides. The peace that comes from God, by the Spirit, is often beyond our understanding, perhaps because so often, it comes into our lives in times that are anything but peaceful. And we don't get it. It doesn't make sense. But it is real. And that peace can then give us the confidence to follow where the light of the Spirit is leading and trust the wisdom that allows us to have a right judgment about all things.

And in that, we discover a wonderful circuitousness to this prayer and we begin again.

- Jim Bargmann

Show Red on Pentecost: This Sunday!

One of our Mount Olive community suggested that we all could not only wear red on Pentecost (which many of us do), we might find a way to display red outside our homes, to let people know of the day. Perhaps someone might even ask, "What is the deal with the red banner?" So, consider how you might welcome the fire of the Spirit visually, and let it show to your neighborhood. Pentecost is this Sunday, May 31, this year.

A Note of Thanks

Thanks to all the massed (masked) parking lot singers for making my 80th birthday the most memorable ever.

- Gene Janssen

Keeping the Day of Pentecost in the Home

What we celebrate in the Christian church as Pentecost (fiftieth day) was originally a Jewish harvest festival that gradually took on the additional significance of commemorating the giving of the Torah to the Jewish people, to guide and inspire and form into a covenant community. Christian Pentecost is the fiftieth day after Easter, the culmination of the Easter season, one of the three great festivals of the church, along with Christmas and Easter. It is the day on which the Holy Spirit was given to the followers of Christ, to guide and inspire and form into a covenant community. In the giving of the Spirit, the church is given the gift of community and mission, enlightenment, and new life together in Christ. The Spirit - *pneuma, ruach*, breath, air wind - brings Christ's Body to life again in the world. In the eastern church, the color for Pentecost is green, and branches and flowers are carried in procession. The day is marked in the western church by the color red, and with flames, and wind, and with many languages. In the mediæval church, a dove was often released through what was called a Holy Ghost hole in the ceiling of the church. The Pantheon, St. Mary and the Martyrs, in Rome continues the tradition of dropping rose petals on the people to represent the flames of fire that appeared above the heads of the followers of Christ gathered for the Jewish festival of Shavuot ("Weeks") in Acts 2. In your home, consider keeping the festival by wearing red; making red wind socks; hanging a picture of a dove from the ceiling or light; folding origami doves and hanging them. Bring red flowers into your space, and make a red dessert like strawberry shortcake. Sing "*Veni Creator Spiritus*" or Luther's "Come Holy Ghost." Read aloud Gerard Manley Hopkins' poem "God's Grandeur." Tie red streamers to children's wrists and let them dance. In the evening, light seven candles for the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the promised gift from the Risen and Ascended Christ. Pentecost is a day for joy and festivity.

Holy Ghost Hole, Church of Peter and Paul, Söll, Tyrol:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pentecost#/media/File:St.Peter_und_Paul_in_S%C3%B6ll_-_Heilig-Geist-Loch.jpg

Rose petals at the Pantheon: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H2oonJczFSM>

Art images of Pentecost: <https://imaginemdei.blogspot.com/2016/05/tongues-of-fire.html>

To make a windsock: <https://www.thesprucecrafts.com/diy-tissue-paper-windsock-craft-4053754>

To fold origami doves: <https://www.thesprucecrafts.com/diy-tissue-paper-windsock-craft-4053754>

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, first in the StayHomeMN, and now the StaySafeMN, 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.

This week, there were no new submissions for our Sharing, Inspiration, or Education segments. Please send us stories, pictures, and ideas. We want and need your involvement. However, a number of people have asked about the Diaper Depot and how that ministry has adapted to this time, and so I thought I would take some time to write about that. Certainly, other Neighborhood Ministry programs are also operating, and I am happy to share more about those in future issues of *The Olive Branch*.

Diaper Depot Update

When we first went under the StayHomeMN directives, we moved to using special phone numbers for people to either call or text with requests for assistance or referrals. Diaper Depot was given a special dedicated number. Originally, we still continued to operate out of the Mount Olive building. We would take orders by text, and then bring the diapers up to parents waiting out on the sidewalk. Because we quietly started offering diapers for free - not wanting to take the additional risk of exchanging cash or cards, we limited our services to families that were already registered. Offering services in this way became more and more difficult; we started to have trouble securing the required numbers of bulk diapers from our suppliers.

We then moved to a “just in time” ordering process and started to allow new families to participate. It became too difficult to continually say no when it was obvious there was need. In addition, some of our regular families were not participating, so we had some capacity to expand. Families would still text their orders. We then would fulfill the orders through store provided delivery services or, if families were able to venture out, we would send in a “pick up in store order” on their behalf. This process, too, quickly had to be abandoned. On many occasions, the needed diapers were shown as being out of stock in the store, and so no orders were possible. Plus, I (Jim) began to feel uncomfortable with utilizing the work of delivery drivers, most who are not paid much, to do work that I could do myself.

I added hours to the Diaper Depot ordering window - we now accept orders from 9 am to 6 pm on Tuesdays, all by text or phone call. I then shop for the needed diapers on Wednesdays, and then deliver them, with a mask, gloves, and completely contactless, to the homes of each of the families.

COVID-19 and Our Mission Partners

Update on Bright Stars of Bethlehem

How is COVID-19 affecting our mission partners around the world? In recent weeks, the Missions Committee has shared information on Mount Olive's partners in Guatemala, India, and Nigeria, and one of our two partners in the Middle East.

This week, we share information on the second one of our partners in that region: Bright Stars of Bethlehem.

"Bright Stars of Bethlehem is a US-based 501(c)3 non-profit organization that promotes peace and justice in Palestine through Dar al-Kalima University of Arts and Culture and its initiatives for youth, families and older adults, as well as public advocacy for basic human rights"

(<http://brightstarsbethlehem.org/who-we-are/about-bright-stars/>).

Bright Stars' current challenge, said the Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb, who is the university president, is to "keep the operation running" and "reach out to our students through online classes." The university now offers half of its classes online. Paying the Internet bill is crucial.

One difficulty is Bethlehem is entirely blocked to tourists. "Over 70% of the Bethlehem economy depends on tourism," said the Rev. Dr. Raheb. Due to unemployment, students are unable to pay tuition.



In addition, Bright Stars relies on tourism for 20% of its income. Bright Stars has a guest house, a restaurant, and an "authentic tourism" program. The Rev. Dr. Raheb expects them to generate no income for the coming 18 months or so.

"The impact on our ministry . . . is devastating," said the Rev. Dr. Raheb. "We are not sure if we can keep staff, how many, how to pay salaries, etc." "We have to make some very, very tough decisions."

Screen shot is of the Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb (right) in conversation with Kris Ducett Wagner, the executive director of Bright Stars, as part of a livestream recorded April 11. Called "Easter Covid Watch Party," it featured stories of shared suffering and hope from Palestine and the U.S. In this portion, she asks him questions about how COVID-19 has affected Bright Stars. He outlines their financial difficulties.

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!

Stewardship Reminder

Thank you everyone for your compassion and commitment to Mount Olive. We want to make the process of supporting our church financially easy and convenient for everyone. 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.

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>

Mount Olive Lutheran Church

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*A congregation of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

Sunday Eucharist:
Temporarily suspended

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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.*

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