



The Olive Branch

September 2, 2020

Sunday Readings A publication of Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota

September 6, 2020
14th Sunday after Pentecost
 Lectionary 23 A
 Exodus 12:1-14
 Psalm 149
 Romans 13:8-14
 Matthew 18:15-20

September 13, 2020
15th Sunday after Pentecost
 Lectionary 24 A
 Exodus 14:19-31
 Psalms 114
 Romans 14:1-12
 Matthew 18:21-35

Accent on Worship

Cantor David Cherwien

What's in a verb?

When you open the liturgy video file from Mount Olive that has been prepared for you, what verb to you use to describe what you're doing? "I _____ the liturgy at around 8:00 am on Sundays." There are many options for verb: "do" "watch" "observe" "enjoy" "endure" (I hope not that one). The verb can be very telling.

This past week, after waiting over a month for a painter to come and repair and paint our wooden porch steps and handrails, I decided to just do it myself. This is something I do know how to do, I've done it several times in the past. It's just easier to hire someone to do it for me. And of course, while it may sound convenient to say, but true: it helps the economy. The bottom line truth is that I've gotten lazy, which is something I can just decide not to be. It actually felt good to accomplish taking that project on myself. But it would have been so much easier to hire someone to do it for me.

Coming back to the opening proposition above, I can share that the components we assemble for this liturgy-at-home are prepared with the assumption of us doing all those things, not for simply watching. Yet even as a person responsible for providing close to half of the time on those videos, I'll admit I've slipped into using the verb "watch" more than "do." It's easier to hire someone else to do my work. I need to work on that - I can decide not to be passive. Even if I think I'm by myself, there is someone watching. And it's not the person I live with. It's the object of this time: God.

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

Children's Choirs

Children's Choir Director, Mari Espeland, is working on a virtual experience for children from 4-year-old pre-school through second grade. Not only will we meet via Zoom, we will also explore a curriculum created by Musikgarten called "Friends in God's World." Weaving together music, movement, and Christian faith, "Friends in God's World" focuses on stories from the Old Testament. Songs, prayers, poems, and Bible stories will be part of our choir time and also included on a recording (CD or digital download) provided for family use throughout the week. Tenets from Dalcroze, Kodály, Orff, and Montessori pedagogies are incorporated into the curriculum, which keep the sessions active and child-centered.

"The spontaneity, creativity, and openness of childhood allow the child to experience God intuitively in relationships with others and with the natural world they encounter. Through these relationships, the child grows in knowledge of God and the child's faith grows as it is experienced with significant adults and in the Christian community." (from "Friends in God's World" introductory material).

Although the Children's Choir will not be preparing to sing in liturgy in the literal sense, we will continue to grow in faith through music and movement. Staying connected to our church family is especially important at this time. A weekly Children's Choir Zoom is one way we can be church during a pandemic and continue to sing God's praise in our homes.

Stay tuned for more information or contact Cantor Cherwien.

Do You Have a Story to Tell?

It is time to begin collecting oral and written histories for our archives about the experience of Mount Olive leaders and members as we have lived through the COVID-19 pandemic and the unrest following the murder of George Floyd in our neighborhood.

The first thing that we need are volunteers who are interested in doing (physically distanced) interviews and/or organizing written histories. No experience in doing oral history work is necessary. You just need an interest in history and the ability to record an interview on a cell phone. Training provided. If you're interested, please email Lora Dundek at lhdundek@usfamily.net, or call her at 651/645-6636.

Book Discussion

The Mount Olive Book group will be meeting virtually on the second Saturday of each month until we can meet again in person.

On Saturday, September 12, 10 a.m., we will meet online to discuss the book *My Grandmother Told Me to Tell You She's Sorry*, by Fredrik Backman. The October book (October 10) will be *Arrowsmith*, by Sinclair Lewis.

We will be using Google Meet platform. You do not need to download anything on your computer in order to join - just click on the link below. If you prefer, you may join by phone.

Join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/846736957>

You can also dial in using your phone:

United States (Toll Free):
1-877-309-2073

United States: +1 (646) 749-3129

Access Code: 846-736-957

Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

The last line of this Sunday's Gospel made me chuckle a bit at first. "Where two or three are gathered..." I used to walk into the narthex at around 7:45 am, see two lone folks sitting in there far apart from each other, and say to the ushers "We've reached the biblical mandate." Now when I read that sentence this week, I finished the sentence "Where two or three are gathered, there is COVID," then go right to the thought, "Oh that we could do that: gather." But we ARE gathering. Just in a new and different way. Although, I will have to admit, I'm also tiring of the sentiment that we're being stretched into new things during these unprecedented times as if we were all becoming fossilized in our ways had it not been for the pandemic. Along with each week's observance via the video liturgy, I feel sadness. Yes, we're learning new things, but oh, how I yearn for the ability to GET TOGETHER, and of course, to have the luxury, the freedom, the privilege, the joy, the _____ (you fill in other words here), to SING together. We are still in exile six months and going.

Sigh. For now, we must continue to do these liturgies seemingly by ourselves, but we can take the initiative and do all the activities/responses, like sing. Sing like no one is listening. Although there is One in Three who is listening, and I suspect, delighted in not only the sounds we're making, but the spirit in it. In truth, in addition to the Holy Trinity being present, at least 2 or three of us are indeed gathering too. Often when I start the video, I see at the bottom "Zero views" yet when I'm done, I'll check it again and see "27 views" which means close to 30 of us DID the liturgy at the same time! By noon that number is well over 100. I'm imagining who those 27 might be, and it's not that hard to remember. Susan and I joke about our pattern: I go to the "early" service, around 8, and she at 10:30. So already, observing the Lord's day, even at a particular time knowing that others doing the liturgy at the same time, is a great start. Lighting a candle may be the next thing. Then all sorts of activities for us to do - the delightful non-passive work of liturgy like saying the responses out loud instead of just thinking them.

So - as this Sunday's opening hymn says, WE are the two or three living stones of the church. God gives us strength as we "interlock" like large bricks, getting stronger as we lean on each other - even in isolation. Be it virtual 2, be it 27, be it well over 100. We are together, even when doing liturgy virtually.

- Cantor David Cherwien

Cantorei, Youth Choir, and Instrumentalists

Normally this coming week would be the start of Cantorei rehearsals and Sunday liturgies, and Youth Choir soon thereafter. Of course, due to the pandemic, we cannot yet do so safely. For now, quartets of singers comfortable coming in (following protocol, including at least 9-foot distancing) to record small portions of the liturgy for an approaching Sunday. Until such a time when we can once again form an assembly for Sunday liturgy, this will remain in effect. If you would like to sing for these recordings, do contact Cantor Cherwien.

For those of you who are instrumentalists and would be willing to record a piece of literature at home, please let Cantor Cherwien know!

Neighborhood Ministry Update

Jim Bargmann

Our Friday Food & Supply Distribution continues!

Once again, thank you to all who have served and continue to serve. All are welcome.

Each Friday, we distribute cleaning supplies, laundry detergent, personal care items, diapers, and of course, food to between 100-120 people representing around 80 households.

Volunteers Needed! We can always use more volunteers help set up, assist our neighbors in getting what they need, and clean up. The more we have, the lighter the work for all. To sign up, visit:

<https://tinyurl.com/y5yx7j6a>. We begin set-up at 8:00 am and begin giving out food and supplies at 9:00 am. We close at 10:30 am, and then clean up.

Donations Needed! We are continuing to establish new partnerships with area congregations and non-profits to provide food and supplies.

If you are able to donate food, cleaning supplies, or personal care items, there are two ways you can do so. 1) Buy whatever you would like to donate and bring it to Mount Olive between 8:00 - 9:00 am on Fridays; and 2) Order items from Target that will then be shipped directly to Mount Olive. We have set up a Target wish list with items commonly needed or requested by our neighbors. If you wish to donate some of these items, simply click on this link and order the items you wish to donate. To order, visit:

<http://tgt.gifts/MountOliveLutheranGroceries>

Advocacy Work

In an important time for governmental policy and leadership, the Mount Olive Neighborhood Committee is renewing its advocacy work on behalf of issues that align with our work in our community including but certainly not limited to racial justice, criminal justice reform, housing, and food security. Kathy Krueger is currently working on multiple advocacy issues related to housing with our neighborhood ministry partner, Align MPLS. If you are interested in joining her, the team meets once a month. Contact Kathy (kathleenkrueger13@yahoo.com) for more information.

Currently, they are advocating for a new women's shelter project in north Minneapolis, an important and needed addition to that community. Here are a few of the important points and ways you can take action, even if you are not able to join Kathy in our larger advocacy efforts.

- Hennepin County and the Minneapolis Public School Board have discussed selling the Gordon Center in North Minneapolis to Hennepin County for \$1. The county and city will then spend \$4 Million to abate the lead and renovate the facility.
- The Minneapolis Public School Board meets next in early September when it is likely to vote on the sale of the Center. But they need to hear from us.
- At least one member is vocally opposed to the sale; we are not sure how the other nine members will vote. They need to know you support the conversion of the unused center to a much-needed Women's Shelter.
- Currently, the city's shelter system cannot house all the women in need.
- Minneapolis needs more shelters in response to our housing crisis.
- Minneapolis needs a culturally specific shelter for women of color.
- And perhaps most importantly, Street Voices of Change, a program of Align Mpls, representing those who have current or past personal experiences with homelessness, have advocated for this type of shelter in this part of the city.

Here is the link to the Minneapolis Public School Board (of Education) contacts:

<https://board.mpls.k12.mn.us/>

For more Information: <https://www.hennepind2.com/statements/2020/7/31/statement-on-planned-shelter-at-the-gordon-center>

Walk for Hope

All are invited to join the Mount Olive Missions Committee as they raise funds for our Common Hope partners. Pastor Joseph Crippen is representing us as he walks for Hope. Pastor Crippen and 25 other Mount Olive members and friends visited the Common Hope sites and returned filled with admiration for the work that they do. Many Mount Olive members individually sponsor Common Hope children. The virtual walk is on September 20.

Visit and support Pastor Crippen at <https://give.commonhope.org/fundraiser/2874013>. If you'd like to walk yourself and seek support from your friends and family, visit <https://give.commonhope.org/event/virtual-walk-for-hope/e269434>.

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!

Did You Adopt-A-Drain During the Love Made Visible Challenge?

"First, we'd just like to say thanks for doing your part in helping to keep our local waterways cleaner and healthier. You, along with 7,000+ other storm drain adopters, have adopted over 12,000 drains and helped to keep over 200,000 pounds of debris out of our lakes, rivers and streams. Keep up the amazing work!

But we have more work to do. Please help us build our capacity to do it by recruiting a friend (or two) to adopt a storm drain in their neighborhood. We've found that people are most receptive to hearing about the program from their friends and neighbors – aka YOU! With our largest community outreach effort being canceled this year (The Minnesota State Fair) we are hoping our passionate volunteers can help us spread the word.

For each new adopter that names you as their referrer when they sign up between now and Labor Day (9/7/2020), both you and the new adopter will receive a free Adopt-a-Drain tote bag – perfect for showing off your dedication to the environment (while supplies last). They can find adoptable storm drains near them and sign up in just a few minutes by visiting our website.

Again, thank you for all of your hard work and dedication to the Adopt a Storm Drain effort. We couldn't do it without you!"

Sincerely,
The Adopt-a-Drain Team

Note: This effort is endorsed by Mount Olive's Climate Justice Team. For more information, contact Judy Hinck.

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 US mail. 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>

Christ in Our Home Available

The new copies of the devotional book, *Christ in Our Home* (October – December) have arrived in the church office.

If you would like one mailed to your home, please contact the church office either by email to welcome@mountolivechurch.org, or by calling the church office at 612-827-5919. We have plenty to share. Please specify if you need a large print edition, otherwise we will just mail the small booklet.

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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Staff

Pastor – *Joseph Crippen*

Cantor – *David Cherwien*

Vicar – *Andrea Bonneville*

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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