

The Olive Branch



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SUNDAY READINGS

Sunday, September 13

Exodus 14:19-31
 Psalm 114
 Romans 14:1-12
 Matthew 18:21-35

Sunday, September 20

Exodus 16:2-15
 Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45
 Philippians 1:21-30
 Matthew 20:1-16

At this time, all worship services 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.

Accent on Worship

Vicar Andrea Bonneville

Peter asks, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but I tell you, seventy-seven times." (Matthew 18:21-22)

This week's powerful parable of forgiveness for the people of God proclaims to us that forgiveness is not a one and done event. When another person sins against us, we are instructed in this parable to forgive as many times as we must and ultimately to forgive from the heart. But... What are we instructed to do when we are in need of forgiveness? Or rather... What are we instructed to do when we need to forgive ourselves?

Guilt can burden us. Perfection can make us fixate. Regret can crush us. Anger can cloud our judgment. Fear can hold us back. These emotions linked to a memory, situation, or experience can often flood our bodies and leave us filled with shame.

Yet, in this week's Gospel reading we are reminded that to not forgive leads to torture. Shame can torment us—acting like the subtle ringing in the ear that seems to linger for just a little too long.

If we refuse to acknowledge the shame, refuse to acknowledge that we actually need to forgive ourselves, we may never experience release from that which prevents us from fully living into our identity as Beloved children of God.

Forgiving ourselves for what we did or didn't do releases us to value ourselves again. Forgiving ourselves for what we should have done or what we couldn't do releases us to act again. Forgiving ourselves for biases we had or continue to have releases us to perceive and imagine in new ways.

Forgiving ourselves may be what frees us to do that which God is calling us into today.

To witness to the proclamation that daily we rise knowing that we are beloved by God and through Christ we are forgiven. To witness to where we ache, where our neighbor hurts, and where our community is suffering.

Forgiveness has never been and will never be a one and done event. Each day we rise with grace as we release ourselves from shame, freeing us to seek healing, justice, peace, and reconciliation.

*In the presence
of God.
Being the presence
of God.*

Reminder for Godly Play Families

We are having a drive-through fall kick-off event for Godly Play families to see their instructors and pick up information on Godly Play for this year, plus a few goodies! You're invited to join us this Sunday, September 13, from 3:30-4:30 pm. The route will be the same as for Vicar Reading's send-off: approach the south parking lot from the south via the alley that runs between Elliot and Chicago Avenues.

Introducing Our New Vicar

Our new vicar, Andrea Bonneville DeNaples, grew up on the Iron Range, halfway between Bob Dylan and Judy Garland – that is to say, she grew up on Big McCarthy Lake (Nashwauk, Minnesota), which is midway between Dylan's Hibbing and Garland's Grand Rapids, and, oh yes, she grew up decades after their departures.

The daughter of an iron ore miner (mom) and a carpenter (dad), Andrea skipped out on her 11th grade Roman Catholic confirmation class to share pizza and board games over at the Lutheran church. She never went back.

Her parents acquiesced to her rebelliousness. "Mom said I could have done a lot worse things as a teenager than switch churches," Andrea recalled.

At Concordia College in Moorhead she studied religion and sociology. A study-abroad session sent her traveling through India, opening her eyes to a wider world. The country's rigid social strata compelled her to think

more deeply about America's inequities. "We have our own injustices," she said.

Between college and seminary, Andrea worked for the Lutheran Volunteer Corps in Milwaukee. There, she met her future wife, Taylor DeNaples, a St. Olaf grad from Colorado with a similar enthusiasm for the Gospel and social justice. They were married nine months ago. Taylor works at Redeemer Center for Life, a Lutheran outreach program in North Minneapolis.

As part of her education at Luther Seminary, Andrea also trained for a year as a chaplain at Methodist Hospital in St. Louis Park. She was working in the hospice program when the COVID pandemic struck, forcing her to care for patients and their loved ones remotely. Those skills now come into play here at Mount Olive, where she won't have the normal Sunday morning Eucharists and coffee hours to meet parishioners face to face.

That's a big challenge, she acknowledged, describing the "deep

longing" that congregations have for face-to-face fellowship and communal worship experiences. But she sees, also, a potential strength in this time of exile: a deepening of commitment to "authentically follow Christ's example in loving God and neighbor," and a better understanding that, yes, there's "disappointment in our longing to be together again but also a realization that we're not alone in this, and that we're all in this together."

Vicar Andrea welcomes your calls and emails of introduction – and plans to make a few contacts of her own.

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. 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 our site 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.

Holy Ground 1 and 2 Adopted

Art and Elaine Halbardier have adopted two of the drains at 31st and Chicago, and when you adopt-a-drain, you get to name it, hence Holy Ground 1 and Holy Ground 2. Others on our corner are available, or perhaps there are one or two on your block. Walt and Judy Hinck take care of Ellie and Avi. Who would you like to adopt?

The web site lets you know which drains are available and lets you set the times that you would like to get a reminder to clean and report. And you get a cool little sign for your yard. What's not to love? Check it out today at <https://adopt-a-drain.org>.

Children's Choirs News

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.

Contact Cantor Cherwien for more information.

Introducing: Virtual Coffee Hour

Join fellow Mount Olive friends and members for an hour of remote socializing! Beginning Sunday, September 13, we are setting up weekly video chat meetings using Google Meet on Sundays from 9-10 am. You can join by video on a smart phone or computer, or you can join by phone to participate in the informal conversations. Mark your calendars, and stay tuned for more information about how to join later this week in a TWIG.

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 (kathleenkruger13@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.
- 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>.

Book Discussion Group

The Mount Olive Book Discussion group will meet 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.

To join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone, visit:

<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

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.

A Note of Thanks from Carolyn

Thanks to God for his gift of one hundred years of grace, love, forgiveness, and care – and thank you also, my Mount Olive friends, for the time we have spent together in prayer, confession, worship, and fellowship.

Your varied expressions celebrating my 100th birthday with me has brought me much joy.

- Carolyn Mowery

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!

Friday Food Distribution

Over the past three months, many people have responded so generously to our requests for help for neighbors who were left without a way to access food, personal care items and household items due to the civil unrest following the murder of George Floyd.

The Target charitable registry alone has seen nearly seventy people purchase over 2,000 items. Many of those people are not members of Mount Olive, but heard about our efforts through social media, and pitched in to help. In addition, several donors have provided monetary gifts to help purchase additional items. Churches outside the metro area have sponsored food and cash drives and contributed to the effort. And many people, some members, some not, have shown up faithfully every Friday morning to pitch shelters, fill tables with donated goods, and welcome our neighbors to come in and take what they need. For many folks who are the working poor, a bag of groceries and a bottle of laundry detergent may make the difference between being able to eke out the month's rent or utility bills.

In spite of the challenges of our current times, we are incredibly lucky to have among us good and generous members and friends, able leaders, and a wonderful neighborhood in which to serve. As we prepare to wind down this effort at the end of September, please consider making a donation of cash, or visiting the Target site at tgt.gifts/mountolive.lutheran.org/groceries, and sending a needed item through the registry. You, and our neighbors will be glad you did!



Join in Responding

Your Missions Committee committed additional funds as we faithfully respond to needs around the world, and we invite you to join us. We sent additional funds to Lutheran Disaster Response (<https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/Lutheran-Disaster-Response/>) after the Iowa derecho storm, and we know that the needs are even greater now with hurricane and fire relief. Through our partners at Lutheran World Relief (<https://lwr.org>) we sent aid to Beirut families following the disastrous harbor explosion. We trust these organizations and encourage you to help.



Mount Olive Lutheran Church

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Lutheran Church in America*

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Pastor – [Joseph Crippen](#)

Cantor – [David Cherwien](#)

Vicar – [Andrea Bonneville](#)

Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministries

- [Jim Bargmann](#)

Administrative Assistant – [Cha Posz](#)

Sexton – [James Wilkes](#)

Prayer Times (for individuals) in the Nave begin next week

These have been hard times for many, and in our congregation, missing coming into church, the silence, the peace, with the windows and carvings and the beauty that has led us deeper into God's presence, has been a huge absence. We can't worship together in our nave yet, but starting next week the nave will be opened at set times for a limited number of people to come and pray, meditate, contemplate.

Starting September 15, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, the nave will be opened for personal prayer time. There will be a limit of 10 people permitted in there at a time, and a host in the narthex will welcome and guide all through the COVID plan Mount Olive has established.

Please enter through the narthex doors only, and, except for use of the bathrooms, please stay out of the rest of the building, to ensure safety of all. Everyone who comes will be asked to answer a list of health questions – the usual that you may have encountered in other places. All will be required to say that you haven't had a recent fever, cough, shortness of breath, loss of smell, etc., and sign in. (If mobility prevents you from entering via the narthex, please contact the church office and you'll be able to come through the north door and the elevator. All COVID protocols still apply.)

All will be required to wear masks securely covering both the mouth and the nose, and keep at least 10 feet apart from anyone else in the nave.

Going forward, the narthex doors will be opened on Tuesdays from 2:30 – 5:30 p.m. and on Thursdays from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., starting with Tuesday, September 15. Times and availability can be adjusted as need seems to arise.

Healthy hosts will be needed to sit in the narthex for these times and ensure that those who come follow Mount Olive's COVID plan. If you'd be willing to host, please contact Tom Olsen, who is going to be keeping a schedule.