

The Olive Branch



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SUNDAY READINGS

Sunday, September 27

Exodus 17:1-7
 Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16
 Philippians 2:1-13
 Matthew 21:23-32

Sunday, October 4

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-8, 12-20
 Psalm 19
 Philippians 3:4b-14
 Matthew 21:33-46

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

Jim Bargmann

My spiritual director and I speak frequently about the concept of wilderness in Scripture. To go into all the various things we have discovered together about wilderness would take many conversations or far too many pages of text to share, especially in this context. But I am struck by the fact that we now find ourselves in a series of Old Testament readings where the Israelites are in the wilderness.

My son Nathan noticed this too, and is often his inclination as a geography enthusiast, he looked up a map of the Israelites' journey from Egypt to the Promised Land - the time often referred to as the wanderings in the desert or wilderness. His comment? They could have gotten there much quicker if they went the direct route. An understatement for sure. And we had a really good, deep conversation about the reason for their wandering and what God can bring out of wilderness experiences.

Perhaps you find yourself feeling as though you are in a time of wilderness now. Perhaps like the Israelites, you left a situation of pain and difficulty expecting something better, only to find yourself not in a place of joy and abundance, but rather in an in-between place. Or (dare I be so bold), like all of us, you thought we would be through this pandemic by now or at least on a solid path to recovery. If you, like me, are finding yourself in a place of wilderness, I would invite you to join me in reflecting on the Psalm for this week, in particular verse 4. "...we will tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders he has done."

When we find ourselves in a wilderness, there is value in not only looking at our current experience and what God may be teaching us, but also in reflecting on what God has done for us in the past - "the glorious deeds of the Lord." This remembering can serve to re-center us when our current circumstances seem to be spinning out of control and as though they will never end. God was at work, God is at work, and God will continue to act.

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

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Wed., Sept 23

10 am – Staff meeting
5 pm – Y2 Confirmation
6:30 pm – Y3 Confirmation

Thur., Sept. 24

9:30 am – Time in the Nave
6 pm – Thursday Bible Study

Fri., Sept. 25

9 am – Food Distribution
(Final Session)

Sun., Sept. 27

7 am – Worship at a Distance
9 am – Virtual Coffee Hour

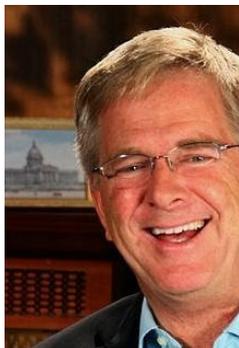
Tues., Sept. 29

Noon – Bible Study
2:30 pm – Time in the Nave

Wed., Sept 30

10 am – Staff meeting
5 pm – Y2 Confirmation
6:30 pm – Y3 Confirmation

Hunger in the Time of COVID-19



The ELCA invites all interested people to an online benefit for ELCA World Hunger. Hosts will include the guidebook author and travel TV host Rick Steves as well as Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and Northwest

Washington Synod Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee. On **Thursday, September 24 at 7:00 p.m.** you can join these leaders as they explore Hunger in the Time of Covid 19. This Zoom event has a goal of raising \$250,000 to confront hunger. You should register on-line by Tuesday, September 22. The link is provided at the end of this article.

During this global pandemic, hunger is increasing at an alarming rate, domestically and internationally. At this event, participants will

learn about the unique ways ELCA World Hunger is responding. The hosts will also discuss the ongoing root causes of hunger and poverty addressed in Rick Steves' recent special Hunger and Hope: Lessons From Ethiopia and Guatemala. And you will hear from ELCA World Hunger partners on the front lines of the current hunger crisis, who will tell you firsthand how your gifts make a difference.

For more information or to register, [click here](#).

Virtual Coffee Hour

Join fellow Mount Olive friends and members for an hour of physically-distanced socializing! There will be weekly video chat meetings using Google Meet every Sunday from 9-10 am. You can join by video on a smartphone or computer, or you can join by phone to participate in the informal conversations. Last week, it was wonderful to see familiar faces, catch up with each other, and get to know Vicar Bonneville. There will be five meeting rooms (for now), and you can feel free to move between them to mingle with others as you'd like. The meeting links are below (the names of the snacks are just for fun-- join whichever one you'd like), and more instructions about how to join will come out later this week in a TWIG.

Coffee / Tea *

<https://meet.google.com/snm-zssf-dni> (US) +1 407-545-7381 / PIN: 641 572 935#

Summer Sausage & Cheese*

<https://meet.google.com/act-expn-hat> (US) +1 402-509-7747 / PIN: 151 809 692#

Cupcakes & Cookies *

<https://meet.google.com/vcp-nyof-fzz> (US) +1 216-930-8951 / PIN: 766 845 823#

Fruit Tray

<https://meet.google.com/fdj-kzbn-qhf> (US) +1 929-324-2312 / PIN: 990 071 513#

Asparagus Rolls

<https://meet.google.com/yse-towb-ivk> (US) +1 650-667-2726 / PIN: 362 246 694#

* indicates rooms hosted by those who can offer extra help to participants

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.

Thursday Bible Study Begins Tomorrow

"How Can I Keep From Grieving"

In the first Thursday Bible study series of this year Vicar Bonneville will lead a conversation about how we experience and witness to grief happening all around us. Throughout the Bible, we hear narratives of individuals and communities who are grieving or have experienced grief. How do we connect with these narratives? What do these narratives tell us about our own grief and our collective grief? How is God communicating to us and with us? How are we communicating with God? Although individual story sharing may be an aspect of our conversation, this study is intended to look deeply at grief as a communal emotion and experience. Pastoral care is always available for continued conversation and support.

The study begins tomorrow evening, Thursday, Sept. 24, meeting through Go-To Meetings from 6:00 - 7:30PM. Come as you are.

Thursday Night Bible Study link:

By computer/tablet: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/342516141>

By phone: 1 877 309 2073 Access Code for phone: 342-516-141.

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.

Neighborhood Ministry Update

Jim Bargmann

Our Friday Food and Supplies Distribution for One More Week ... Then Something New

This Friday will be our last week to distribute cleaning supplies, laundry detergent, personal care items, diapers, and of course, food, to our neighbors. Our leadership team determined that there was no practical way to continue doing our food and supply distribution in its current form when the weather turns cold and wet.

However, after a one week break, we will restart our program in a new way. Beginning on October 8 (yes, a Thursday) we will launch a new way to provide some of the most needed items to our community - laundry soap, cleaning supplies, and personal care items.

The volunteer sign up and donation list at Target will have been updated to reflect this change. Yes, we still need you!

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>

Donations Needed

If you are able to donate 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.
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: <http://tgt.gifts/MountOliveLutheranGroceries>

A Special Online Event with our Partner Align Minneapolis: Align For Housing Justice

Align Minneapolis, one of our key partners in the area of housing security, is hosting a Zoom gathering of supporters, volunteers, friends, and allies.

Join Align Minneapolis and Mount Olive in working to address housing injustice.

Tuesday, September 29, 6:00-7:30 pm

You are invited to hear about the amazing work Align Minneapolis has been doing this past year.

- Hear stories of how the Drake fire and COVID-19 have impacted people's lives and how congregations have collaborated and adjusted during the pandemic to continue providing needed services to those on the brink of homelessness.
- Listen to members of Street Voices of Change and StreetSong MN tell about their unique work for justice.
- Find out how your advocacy scored successes in the legislature last year.
- Get answers to your questions, and discover ways you can personally get involved to continue this important work for housing justice.

Visit this link to register: <https://tinyurl.com/>

Neighborhood Ministry Update, *continued on page 6*

Prayer Times (for individuals) in the Nave

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 during this time 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 north and south narthex doors only (main doors facing Chicago are being repaired), 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.

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.

The October book (October 10, 10 am) will be *Arrowsmith*, by Sinclair Lewis, and the November 14 book is *A Separate Peace*, by John Knowles.

We will use the 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>

Women of Color Need Shelter

A shelter for women of color is hanging in the balance. Your phone call or email can make a really big difference in this happening.

- In 2019, Hennepin County decided that it needed to establish an emergency shelter for women of color and identified an unused facility in the Willard-Hay neighborhood for that purpose, and secured funding for its renovation.
- Some members of the community surrounding the unused facility felt that a youth center was a more appropriate use for the building, and strongly opposed the proposal. This caused Hennepin County to abandon its plans for the facility.
- Remind Hennepin County of its stated commitment to expand its emergency shelter strategy by opening several small-scale culturally specific, 24/7 shelters.
- Women in need of emergency shelter, especially those of color are still being re-victimized by their insecure situations on the streets.

Please consider contacting to the Hennepin County Commissioner representing your area via email or phone about this issue.

Talking Points

- Women without shelter are especially vulnerable on our streets.
- Minneapolis needs more shelters in response to our exploding housing crisis.
- Currently, the city's shelter system cannot house all the women needing shelter.
- Minneapolis needs a culturally specific shelter for women of color.
- Winter is coming; no one should be left on the streets to survive the elements.

To find contact information for your Hennepin County Commissioner, use this link:
<https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/find-commissioner>

Neighborhood Ministries Update, *continued from page 4*

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 Kruger 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.



Mount Olive Lutheran Church

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Lutheran Church in America*

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Church Staff

Pastor – [Joseph Crippen](#)

Cantor – [David Chernvien](#)

Vicar – [Andrea Bonneville](#)

Coordinator of Neighborhood

Ministries - [Jim Barymann](#)

Administrative Assistant – [Cha Posz](#)

Sexton – [James Wilkes](#)

National Lutheran Choir Virtual Subscription

Even though the National Lutheran Choir cannot gather in person at the start of the 2020-21 concert season, their song of hope, faith and love is not silenced! Join as NLC embarks on a unique and meaningful season of programming with a Virtual Subscription that promises twice-monthly content delivered directly to audiences.

Much like a season ticket, the [Virtual Subscription](#) is a great way to stay engaged with the Choir during this time when singers and audiences are unable to safely gather for live performances. At \$10/month (\$90 for the full season) your household will enjoy specially-created content from the NLC video library, behind-the-scenes looks at how the Choir is preparing their 2020 All Saints and Christmas programs and interviews with Artistic Director David Cherwien, Artist in Residence Paul John Rudoj, and much more.

The All Saints and Christmas Festival programs will be newly curated, virtual events that stream for FREE via the NLC website on November 1 and December 11. There is no need to subscribe to enjoy these well-loved events.

For more information – or to subscribe – go to NLCA.com.