

The Olive Branch



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SUNDAY READINGS

Sunday, October 25 Reformation Sunday

Jeremiah 31:31-34
Psalm 46
Romans 3:19-28
John 8:31-36

Sunday, November 1 All Saints Sunday

Revelation 7:9-17
Psalm 34:1-10, 22
1 John 3:1-3
Matthew 5:1-12

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

A confession of a lifelong Lutheran. I struggle with the celebration of Reformation Day.

From an historical perspective, I absolutely understand the need for change and reform in the beliefs, structure, and practice of the 16th century Roman Catholic Church. I also understand and appreciate the significant role played by Martin Luther and others in bringing about that change and reform.

I struggle with the sometimes sectarian, almost nationalistic, pride that characterizes some groups of my fellow Lutherans that sometimes surround this celebration and, in a larger sense, our identity as Lutheran Christians.

And yet, at the same time, as we approach Reformation Day, I find a certain hope in the larger message - that the church is continually being renewed or reformed by the work of the Holy Spirit. I pray that we don't lose a sense that this is important and needed.

In pandemic time, I have seen two predominant attitudes among my friends in church leadership positions.

One attitude could be characterized by a fight to continue doing those activities we are comfortable with, those things that make up the bulk of our congregational programming. I have observed congregations fight and actually sue for the ability to continue doing worship in the ways that are comfortable and familiar. I have seen congregations insist on continuing traditional Sunday school models, delivered electronically. I have seen my church leader friends bending over backwards to continue offering traditional youth ministry programming through computer and phone screens. To me, these offerings seemed much more about supporting the organization of the congregation than serving the very real humans with very real needs.

Accent on Worship, continued on page 2

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

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Wed., Oct. 21

10 am – Staff meeting
5:00 pm – Y2 Confirmation
5:30 pm – Children’s Choir
6:30 pm – Y3 Confirmation

Thur., Oct. 22

9:00 am – Supplies
Distribution
9:30 am – Time in the Nave
6 pm – Thursday Bible Study

Sun., Oct. 25

7 am – Worship at a Distance
9 am – Virtual Coffee Hour
4 pm – MFA Organ Recital
Livestream

Tues., Oct. 27

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

Wed., Oct. 28

10 am – Staff meeting
5 pm – Y2 Confirmation
5:30 pm – Children’s Choir
6:30 pm – Y3 Confirmation

Music and Fine Arts Event to be Livestreamed

Mount Olive Music and Fine Arts: Pandemic-tide Edition!

Sunday October 25, 4pm:

Organ Recital, livestream on the Mount Olive YouTube Channel: Catherine Rodland, Organist (St Olaf College), playing the 55-rank Schlicker Organ at Mount Olive Lutheran Church.

Mount Olive's Music and Fine Arts series will still happen! No, we cannot gather here to hear/see it live yet, but you can see and hear it from your home through Mount Olive's YouTube Channel. The program will include:

Praeludium in F by Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel
Settings of *Ein Fest Burg* - various composers
Bach Prelude and Fugue in Eb (St. Anne)
Mendelssohn *Sonata III* (all)
Two Spiritual Settings by Adolphus Hailstork, *Deep River, Great Day*
Scherzo and Finale of Vierne's *Sixth Symphony for Organ 6*

Mark your calendars, create your at-home reception for yourself to sit down and enjoy during the program!

Watch for additional program offerings in

February and April - whether live or livestream, they're on!



Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

A second attitude could be characterized by a continual desire on the part of church leadership to ask how they could be in service of the people in their congregations and communities during an unprecedented time. I have seen congregations who have been willing to recognize that we may be in a time of exile, as Vicar Reading so skillfully wrote. I have seen these congregations reinvent how they worship to focus on families worshipping together, with a recognition that the whole-person health of those in the community was indeed important. I have seen these congregations recognize very real needs for human connection and yet develop ways to provide for those needs in ways that also acknowledge the very real issues of safety and screen-fatigue. I have seen these congregations respond to the daily bread needs of those in their neighborhoods and communities. I have seen these congregations recognize and wrestle with what it means to acknowledge racism and fight for racial justice.

Could God, though the Holy Spirit, have been using the pandemic as a catalyst of reformation once again? If this is the case, what reform is needed? How can we, as the Church, respond to what the Holy Spirit is doing? What will a newly reformed church look like? What will characterize her ministry? These are questions I find myself asking. These are questions I see many of my friends and colleagues asking. Will you join us, dear Mount Olive friends, in this process of wondering (as our Godly Play kids could teach us) about what the Holy Spirit is doing in this time? Is it perhaps more reformation?

- Jim Bargmann

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 Continues

"How Can I Keep From Grieving"

Vicar Bonneville is leading 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 continues through Oct. 29, meeting through GoToMeeting 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.

Book of Saints

During the weeks leading up to All Saints' Sunday, it has been our practice at Mount Olive to place in the narthex a Book of Saints, a book in which to inscribe the names of those who have died in the year since last All Saints' who are not a part of the Mount Olive community. (Those from the Mount Olive community are always remembered and named in the liturgy of All Saints.) These names are then included in the Prayer of the Church on All Saints', remembered aloud by the Assisting Minister. If you wish to have a name inscribed in the book for this year, please contact Susan Cherwien at susan.cherwien@gmail.com or 952-239-0701, by October 25, 2020.

Semi-Annual Meeting This Sunday

The October semi-annual Congregation Meeting for 2020 will be held **at Noon this Sunday, October 25**. The primary agenda item will be discussion of Mount Olive's 2021 budget.

Watch your mail/email!

Additional information, including specific agenda, budget materials, and instructions for accessing the meeting online will be sent out this Wednesday or Thursday morning. Please plan to attend to hear and join in the discussion.

Neighborhood Weekly Distribution

Jim Bargmann

Helping Our Neighbors with Household and Personal Care Supplies

At the beginning of October, we transitioned our food distribution to a household and personal care supply program. This new program, happening on Thursday mornings, reflects the realities of serving our neighbors safely in a time of a pandemic and imminent colder and wetter weather. Volunteers should arrive at 8:30 am; we will distribute supplies from 9 to 10 am, and then clean up. We are typically done by 10:30 am. We do still need volunteers (though fewer volunteers for this project) - and donations of supplies.

Supplies needed include:

Shampoo	Toothpaste/toothbrushes
Bar soap	All-purpose cleaner
Toilet paper	Feminine hygiene supplies
Laundry soap	Target gift cards
Diapers	

Our volunteer sign up has been updated with our new needs. And the Target shopping list has also been updated to reflect the items we are providing to our neighbors.

Please sign up ... and please continue to donate. If you can't donate online, please consider picking up your donations when you shop and bringing them to the church during office hours (M-F, 8am-3pm).

Volunteer sign up: <https://tinyurl.com/y5yx7j6a>

Donation ordering: <http://tgt.gifts/MountOliveLutheranGroceries>

Prayer Times (for individuals) in the Nave

On Tuesdays (2:30-5:30 pm) and Thursdays (9:30 am-12:30 pm), the nave is opened for personal prayer time. There is 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 are 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 are 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.

Times and availability of the nave can be adjusted as need seems to arise.

Healthy hosts are 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.

Bright Stars of Bethlehem

Mount Olive partners with Bright Stars of Bethlehem because we know the importance of lifting up the stories of our Palestinian neighbors – stories of creativity and warmth but also of the daily burdens of occupation that weigh heavily on them. We are invited to share the joy of all that Bright Stars can continue to accomplish during the virtual “Celebration of Hope” on Saturday, Oct. 24, 7 p.m. CDT. The celebration is an opportunity to learn more about programs in the occupied Palestinian territories and hear from young people there as well as from friends in the United States, including travel guru Rick Steves and author and public theologian Nadia Bolz-Weber, among others. Individuals can register, free of charge, at <http://brightstarsbethlehem.org/>

Lighting Candles for All Saints

In the weeks before All Saints Day there will be three opportunities to come to the church and light a candle in memory of a loved one, since we still aren’t gathering for in-person worship. During the usual weekday times the nave is open for prayer, on **Tuesday, October 27 from 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.**, and on **Thursday, October 29, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**, a sacristan will be vested and in the chancel to assist in lighting a candle, as is our normal Sunday practice for All Saints.

In addition, **the church will be open Sunday morning, All Saints Day, Nov. 1, from 9:00 a.m. to noon**, should you wish to come and light a candle for a loved one that day, and pray in the church.

The Mount Olive COVID plan applies. Please sign in in the narthex, be symptom-free, and wear a mask securely covering your mouth and nose. Someone will be there to assist you. We will keep a limit of 15 people in the nave at a time, and please keep 10 feet distance from others.

Incense for All Saints – Pick it up!

Sticks of frankincense are available for any who wish to take them and light them for their All Saints worship.

If you come to church to church during regular office hours, Monday-Friday, 8am-3pm, use the canopy entrance facing Chicago Ave., can confirm that you are free of COVID symptoms, etc., and wear a mask, you can pick up a stick of incense on the ledge outside the church office, right at the top of the stairs.

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>

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. It has been wonderful to see familiar faces, catch up with each other, and get to know Vicar Bonneville.

There will be four meeting rooms, 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 detailed 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#

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

Donating Promotional Materials

Do you get requests for donations from many charitable organizations? And if you contribute, they respond with "rewards" such as note pads, greeting cards, ball pens, tote bags, etc.

Often these are things we don't need, but we don't want to throw away. The DAV and other trucks that collect donated items from homes can no longer do so.

A few such things were displayed at the food distribution last Thursday and they seemed to be well received. If you have an accumulation of such items, or even just a few, they can be dropped off at the church. Volunteers and staff will sort and display donations at the time of the Thursday supplies distribution. Your participation is anticipated and appreciated.

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 November 14 book is *A Separate Peace*, by John Knowles.

We will use the GoToMeeting platform. Just click on the link below. If you prefer, you may join by phone.

Join the discussion from your computer, tablet or smartphone:
<https://tinyurl.com/y4knn7o3>

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States (Toll Free): 1 866 899 4679

United States: +1 (571) 317-3116

Access Code: 998-208-989

An Update on Neighborhood Ministry

Jim Bargmann

I realized as I was updating my information for the Olive Branch that it had been a few weeks at least since I offered a comprehensive update on what has been happening in Neighborhood Ministry.

Partners of the Month

I have maintained regular contact with our neighborhood partners through the time of the pandemic. You will notice that we continually pray for our partners as a part of our community worship. Most have reopened, offering services in modified form, and as needs arise, I continue to refer people to our partners for services not offered by Mount Olive.

Diaper Depot

Diaper Depot continues to operate in the delivery model that was developed in April. Each week, I receive diaper orders by text, purchase the needed supply, and then deliver diapers to individual homes on Wednesday afternoons. About half of those we serve now participated in our program before the pandemic and half are new to the program since April.

Bus Cards

At the beginning of the pandemic, there was no need for bus cards since MetroTransit was offering free rides to everyone. Last month, we restarted our discount bus card program at Mount Olive. Now, if a person needing a bus card is able, I can take the required information from them by text and mail a card to their home. If someone comes to Mount Olive in need of a card, I meet them outside the building, take a photo of the required documentation, register the card from my office, sanitize the card, and then take the card back to the requesting guest wearing gloves and mask.

Financial Assistance

We have continued to provide financial assistance for things like rent and utilities when we can pay either electronically or through the mail. Requests are taken by text and processed each week.

I have transitioned all but the most urgent rent assistance requests to our partner Align MPLS. The amount of money they can pay out is significantly higher than what we are able to do on our own, and since we are an intake congregation (meaning I can take the application myself), I can walk through the whole application with our guests, assemble the required documents on their behalf, and then submit for approval, all in the same conversation, either by phone or text.

Laundry Vouchers

Chicago Lake Laundry reopened in the first week of October and this program, too, has restarted. As with the our bus card program, I take the required documentation by text or other electronic means, print the voucher, and then either mail it or deliver it to the requestor in a safe manner.

Living Lutheran: National Magazine of the ELCA

Today I want to be a cheerleader for *Living Lutheran* (formerly *The Lutheran*), the monthly magazine of the ELCA.

Until well into the last half of the twentieth century denominational magazines were staples in millions of American homes. The magazines provided information and inspiration that helped people feel connected to what we now call regional, national, and global “expressions” of the church. Then circulation of those magazines dropped dramatically, and many no longer exist. Reasons include, but aren’t limited to, money, the internet, and (not Mount Olive!) declining denominational loyalties. Disclosure: I was managing editor of one of the pre-ELCA Lutheran magazines. The folks who edit and write for *LL* are working hard—

mostly from home just now—to give us news, features, and columns that can help us as individuals and congregations become more effective servants of Christ. *Living Lutheran* is available in print, digital, and audio formats, and online it offers additional content. Mount Olive’s geothermal cooling system is featured in “Congregations go green,” in the August issue.

Cha tells me that close to fifty Mount Olive households (including mine) now get the print edition of *LL*, paid for by the congregation, which gets a group rate. That option remains available. I don’t know how many of us at Mount Olive are reading *LL* online, but I’m pretty certain we have an out-of-sight, out-of-mind problem and could use some reminders—but, please, not too many!).

Here’s what you can do. Go to *Living Lutheran*’s website: (<https://www.livinglutheran.org/>).

At the bottom of the page you’ll see links to current and past issues of *LL*, which you can read anytime. Go to “subscribe” and sign up for the free LLStories e-digest. Select categories that interest you, and opt to get the digest weekly, every other week, or monthly (alternatively, you could follow *LL* on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or LinkedIn). I’ve recently been trying most of these options; then I’ll settle on what works best for me.

- Donn McLellan

News from TRUST

The Annual TRUST Auction

Listen (<https://vimeo.com/465119170>) to TRUST Board member Mary Corlett, who represents St. John’s Episcopal Church, as she shares with her church and the community about the work of TRUST, and invites all to take part in The 2020 Great TRUST Auction on Oct. 24 at 5 p.m. via www.trustinc.org.

Turn your Amazon purchase into a donation to TRUST.

Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible smile.amazon.com purchases to TRUST via its AmazonSmile program. Simply click on TRUST’s unique link (<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/41-0965940>) to indicate your support for TRUST. Spread the word!

Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels is able to provide meals to anyone over the age of 18 who lacks access to healthy food due to the COVID-19.

Thanks to the CARES Act, anyone who does not qualify for meals through another program is eligible to receive meals from Meals on Wheels at no cost through Dec. 31. To sign up for meals visit <https://meals-on-wheels.com/get-meals/sign-up/>.



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Vicar – [Andrea Bonneville](#)

Coordinator of Neighborhood

Ministries - [Jim Barymann](#)

Administrative Assistant – [Cha Posz](#)

Sexton – [James Wilkes](#)

National Lutheran Choir All Saints Program

The National Lutheran Choir brings the annual All Saints concert program to virtual audiences on Sunday, November 1, 2020. We come to the 2020 All Saints program saddened by the losses of an extremely difficult year and challenged to remember, persevere, and hope.

With the very breath of so many being silenced by illness and injustice, NLC commissioned artist in residence Paul Rudoi to compose a new setting of the hymn text “Breathe on me, Breath of God.” This work--and the undying yearning to be comforted and changed by the breath of God--forms a through-line for the program.

A core component of the program resides in a set of powerful African American spirituals by composer Moses Hogan and arrangers Marques Garrett and William Dawson. These works have much to teach us about God’s love through hardship and loss. Music by John Tavener and Heinrich Schütz round out this newly curated, virtual program that will feature new performances by NLC singers in physically-distanced settings.

Sunday, November 1, 2020 - 4pm (CST) @ NLCA.com

This online presentation is FREE for all. For a season-long Virtual Subscription to exclusive content (\$10/month), visit www.NLCA.com.