

The Olive Branch



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Accent on Worship

Jim Bargmann

In my previous ministry role with a different congregation, my position involved the teaching of confirmation. In this role, I often worked with my students in examining the origins and roots of words, both from Scripture itself and from the ecclesiastical practices we were learning about.

As I considered the writing of this article, I wondered what I might discover if I were to look again at the origins and roots of the Greek word Epiphany. I wondered if there might be something there that could open up an insight or two for us as we prepare to celebrate that feast day.

Epiphany, of course, historically, refers to a revealing, a making known. More modern usage has drifted more to the idea of discovery or realization.

In looking at the roots of the word, there are two. *Epi* and *phany*. The prefix *epi* means a revealing, discovery, presentation. It was at this point in my research that I realized an unfortunate connection between our word epiphany and another *epi*-word we have come to know all too well. Epidemic. The revealing or presentation [of a disease] in a community. Originally, the meaning of this word only had to do with a revealing of something in a group of people - demic - but modern usage has limited it to use in reference to disease or infection.

So what to do with this unfortunate collision between two terms? Is there something fortunate that can come out of something seemingly unfortunate?

I think so. Because the second part of the word epiphany, *phany*, means manifestation. Most commonly, *phany* was combined with *theo* to create theophany, meaning the manifestation of a god - and that common usage carried into the use of *phany* when combined with *epi* as well. So we have our now known definition of Epiphany - the revealing of God - namely, the infant Jesus - revealed to the magi and the world.

Accent on Worship, continued on page 2

SUNDAY READINGS

Sunday, January 10 Baptism of Our Lord

Genesis 1:1-5
Psalm 29
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11

Sunday, January 17 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]
Psalm 139:1-6; 13-18
1 Corinthians 6:12-20
John 1:43-51

*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.*

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

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Wed., Jan. 6

Epiphany of Our Lord

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

Sun., Jan. 10

Baptism of Our Lord

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

Mon., Jan 11

7 pm – Vestry meeting

Tues., Jan 12

Noon – Bible Study

Wed., Jan. 13

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

Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

Though Scripture and though our own experiences, many of us have experienced a pattern of behavior in God. God has a tendency to show up, to become known, when circumstances are most dire. God certainly is present through those circumstances, but it’s the made known part, the Epiphany, that sometimes seems, at least to us humans, to be delayed. Recall the people of Israel standing on the shore of the Red Sea, pursued by their Egyptian captors. Witness Elijah on the mountain ready to give up, feeling as he was the only one left speaking God’s truth. Take notice of the Jewish people living in occupied Roman territory, ruled by oppressive and demagogic leadership. And God shows up. Epiphany.

The author of Galatians says it this way, “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son...” (4:4).

In these days, in this time, if you are like me, you likely find yourself waiting for the revealing of God, for God to take action. That will happen. Indeed, I believe it is already happening. Perhaps, all we are waiting on is Epiphany. Revealing. A revealing of God and God’s action. Epi - phany.

- *Jim Bargmann*

Leading with Love Toward Energy Democracy

The ELCA Minneapolis Area Synod Eco Justice staff are hosting an online seminar for anyone who is interested in environmental work, January 7, from 2:00-3:00pm.

It will focus specifically on Energy Systems and ways to engage in climate justice action during 2021. This event is for those who know nothing about energy systems to those who might know a lot. When we flip on the light switch we don’t usually think about the complex webs of our energy use – from the actual crisscrossing wires of the grid to the choices we make individually and collectively that shape our energy systems.

Beginning with demystifying this electrical web, we’ll learn how we can take our *power* back – literally. Come to learn about what energy democracy looks like, and how you can be a part of building local solutions.

Register [Here](#)

Stewardship News

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.

Devotional Booklets Available

The newest edition of *Christ in Our Home* (January-March 2021) have arrived in the church office and have been mailed to all who requested them last time.

If you would like this devotional booklet mailed to you, please contact the church office and we will send one out.

Staying in Touch

Are you moving? Have you recently moved?

Don't forget to share your updated contact information (address, phone number, email) with the church office.

During this time when we don't have the opportunity to see or speak with each other in person, it's more important than ever for your friends to be able to reach you.

The church directory has been updated online and in paper format. If you would like an updated directory mailed to you, contact the church office. Likewise, if you are having trouble accessing the online directory, call the church office and we will help to get you connected.

Marking Epiphany in the Home

January 6 is the Festival of the Epiphany, when the Western church remembers the coming of three sages from the East to welcome the Christ child. This was the heralding of the coming of the Christ for all people, all nations. One family or community tradition for celebrating Epiphany is to make a Kings cake. Any pound cake or Bundt cake with an almond hidden inside will work. Whoever finds the almond in their slice of cake becomes Queen or King for the day and does secret kindnesses for the others in the household. In France, the day is celebrated with a cake called Galette des Rois (<https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1019114-galette-des-rois>), in Spain, with Roscon, and in Mexico, Rosca des Reyes. Here is one recipe:

<https://www.kingarthurfleur.com/recipes/three-kings-cake-rosca-de-reyes-or-roscand242n-de-reyes-recipe>.

To prepare your home for Epiphany consider making straw stars or folding origami stars (look online for simple instructions) and hanging them from the ceiling or windows. Make one star larger than the others. Hang it in a central place, or over your creche. If you have a creche with free-standing figures, move the three sages to the stable. Or light many candles, to celebrate the Light of the World.

Another old tradition for Epiphany is the blessing of the home. With a piece of chalk, mark the year, the letters "C M B" and four crosses above the lintel of the doorway into the household [20 + C + M + B + 20]. The letters stand both for the traditional names of the three sages (Caspar, Melchior, Balthasar) and also for the words, "Christus Mansionem Benedicat," "May Christ bless this house," which are said as the lintel is inscribed. The following prayer may be said: "God of heaven and earth, you revealed the Christ to all nations by the guidance of a star. Bless this home and all who dwell in it. Fill us with the light of Christ, that our love for each other may go out into the world for all. In Christ's name we pray, Amen." For more on Epiphany, go to <http://fullhomelydivinity.org/>, click on Traditions and in the left sidebar, click on Epiphany.

Weekly Worship Emails

If you have been regularly receiving the weekly email on Sunday mornings with worship information and links, and you've noticed that for the past week or two you haven't been receiving them, take a moment to check your junk mail folder. Several people with comcast.net email addresses did not receive their Sunday worship email this past weekend in their inboxes, but later found the email junk/spam folders.

Remember, you don't need an email to access the liturgies as all of our online worship materials can also be found on the church's website home page: www.mountolivechurch.org. Just click on the first box, "Worship Online."

Final (?) Bible Study in Session Tomorrow Evening

The final session of the Thursday Bible study series on Romans is this week on **Thursday, Jan. 7**. The time of the study is 6:00 p.m., and should last about 90 minutes. The session may end up needing to be split into two for content, and if that happens, the true final session will be on Jan. 14.

The link to join the meeting on your computer or tablet is: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/342516141>

It's also possible to join by phone – please consider it if you aren't comfortable with video chats. The phone number (just call it at the time of the meeting) is 1 877 309 2073. When you call in, you'll be asked for an access code. It is: **342-516-141**.

Regular link to the Tuesday Noon Bible Study: copy and keep

The link for the Tuesday noon Bible study is 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://tinyurl.com/y4qs46v5>

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://tinyurl.com/y274v5rs>

A Thank You from Neighborhood Ministry

There were a multitude of opportunities to serve our neighbors leading up to Christmas, and Mount Olive family, you responded! And so generously! Thank you.

When we asked for cookies, not only did you respond to our request, but we blew past our goal by nearly 20 dozen cookies. We were able to deliver boxes of cookies to 40 of our physical neighbors on the four blocks nearest Mount Olive. When we asked about gifts for residents of Our Saviour's Supportive and Transitional Housing, we were not only able to fulfill the wish lists of 15 residents, but provide them with cleaning supplies, winter clothing and more. And that is on top of your support for our continued and ongoing work. You have continued to provide monetary donations to support our direct assistance programs. You have continued to send us diaper donations. You have continued to ask about how you can personally care for those you know struggling with housing, food, or financial insecurity. You are incredible people who have allowed God to work through you in many ways.

Thank you.

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 (9-9:30 for the kids' room)**. 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 and catch up with each other.

There will be four meeting rooms, now with one room dedicated for the youngest of the Mount Olive family - "Cupcakes & Cookies"! 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). If you join with a computer, you don't need to install anything or have an account, but if you'd like to join on a phone or tablet, you will need to install the Google Meet app and log in with a Google account. If you have questions about how to join feel free to call Katie Krueger at 419-344-2727 or email katherinerkrueger@gmail.com.

Coffee & Tea

<https://meet.google.com/snm-zssf-dni>

(US) +1 407-545-7381 / PIN: 641 572 935#

Meeting code: snm-zssf-dni

Summer Sausage & Cheese

<https://meet.google.com/act-expn-hat>

(US) +1 402-509-7747 / PIN: 151 809 692#

Meeting code: act-expn-hat

Cupcakes & Cookies - Kids' room

9:00-9:30 a.m.

<https://meet.google.com/vep-nyof-fzz>

(US) +1 216-930-8951 / PIN: 766 845 823#

Meeting code: vep-nyof-fzz

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 January 9, 2021 book will be *No Picnic on Mount Kenya*, by Felice Benuzzi. On February 13, they will discuss *Braiding Sweetgrass*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

We are using 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



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