

# The Olive Branch



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## Accent on Worship

*Cantor David Cherwien*

### *Rhythm Check*

This is a musician's concept, but go along with me if you don't consider yourself one (I would respectfully beg to differ on that). Musicians know that a steady beat is really important. Some would add to that: at the minimum, knowing "where" the beat comes is foundational, even if one is "not there" when it happens. Jazz musicians know this – they stretch and distort rhythm, but it is the healthy tension created by something NOT on the beat in relation to where the beat is that makes it.

We're fast approaching the one-year mark for being in exile from gathering in person for liturgy. Our liturgies are done at home, with the videos as the tools provided to do so. No one is seeing us or knows if we are doing them or not.

So, how is that rhythm going?

Reluctantly, I must admit that some days, I simply didn't feel like opening the lap-top, lighting the candle, and pushing "play" so that I could "do." A feeling of limp enthusiasm for singing or listening would dominate. Submitting to the cat's invitation to play easily diverts my focus. The pain of singing alone (even if joining) without being able to play, of being together but not being able to circulate through the choir at the sharing of the peace, or certainly, not being able to come to the Holy Meal: approaching the table for the body and blood of Christ with you all is just a bit of a downer.

Yet, once the recorded hymn introduction to the entrance hymns, the hymn music and text pops onto the screen, and I hear the vibrancy of a couple hundred voices from a past assembly at Mount Olive comes through my headphones – often a lot of that apathy melts, and I'm glad I did push "play." It's hard to sing along full voice (self-consciousness? Maybe.) But the recharging effect does begin. By the time it's over, I'm glad I had stayed with it.

We need this rhythm: the weekly reminder of where our "steady beat" for life is. Even if we stray a bit from it, our awareness of where it is keeps the tension healthy. One jazz piano musician said something like this to me once: He loved to throw in surprise silences – suspending sound past where the beat should be – and then when going back to the keyboard and go on, everyone's so relieved he was there, they all feel good. However, none of that can happen without awareness of where that beat is. Often a steady beat in music is like breathing – it's there. We really don't notice it until it's not.

## SUNDAY READINGS

**Sunday, January 24**

*3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany*

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Psalm 62:5-12

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Mark 1:13-20

**Sunday, January 31**

*4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany*

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Psalm 111

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Mark 1:21-28

*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. 20

10 am – Staff meeting  
5:30 pm – Children’s Choir

##### Sun., Jan. 24

*3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany*  
7 am – Worship at a Distance  
9 am – Virtual Coffee Hour

##### Tues., Jan 26

Noon – Bible Study  
7 pm – Worship Committee

##### Wed., Jan. 27

10 am – Staff meeting  
5:30 pm – Children’s Choir

## Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

Sundays are the day we observe our weekly festival – the day of the Resurrection. This is our beat. Normally coming together helps us get recharged following all the tensions of the week that might even delay the beat – but coming together to do what we do helps us remember where that beat is. Regularly. Every week. This rhythm, without the ability to gather, needs to continue. What sets Sundays apart for you?

Are you keeping the rhythm? It’s valuable – even if you don’t think you want to. You might need to. In fact, I would be so bold as to say, we all definitely need to. Even if we seem “half there” we are reminded consciously or subconsciously – that the beat goes on, God is still with and among us, and we’re a part of it all. We are a part of that rhythm.

- *Cantor David Chernien*

## Worship Materials Packets to be Available

When Christ's people gather to worship, it is a multi-sensory experience. We use our blessed bodies and all five of our senses in encountering God: singing, praying, listening, kneeling, touching. We feel the drops of baptismal water on our faces, we hear the singing of our neighbors, we see the beauty of icons, the light of candles, we smell the incense, we taste the bread and wine. Much of that multi-sensory experience is hard, if not impossible, to transmit through the worship videos that the Mount Olive staff and ministers are so carefully and beautifully constructing for the use of the community each week. And so the Worship Committee has decided to assemble and make available packets of liturgy materials to aid parishioners in at-home worship, especially for the upcoming holy days of the Presentation and the Transfiguration, for Shrovetide, Ash Wednesday, and the beginning of Lent. Among the materials included in the packets will be candles, incense, ashes, and recipes, as well as multi-age activities related to the liturgies.

The packets will be available for pick-up in the north parish house entrance on **Saturday, January 30, from 10 am to 12 noon**. If you would like to receive a packet but cannot get to the church to pick one up, please notify Dan Hellerich at [worship@mountolivechurch.org](mailto:worship@mountolivechurch.org), and a time will be arranged to drop one off to you.

## 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](http://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.

### 2020 Contribution Statements

Contribution statements for 2020 will soon be in the mail.

These are summary statements, but if you would like a detailed listing of each of your 2020 contributions, please call Cha at the church office and she will be happy to send one to you via email or U.S. post.

## 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.

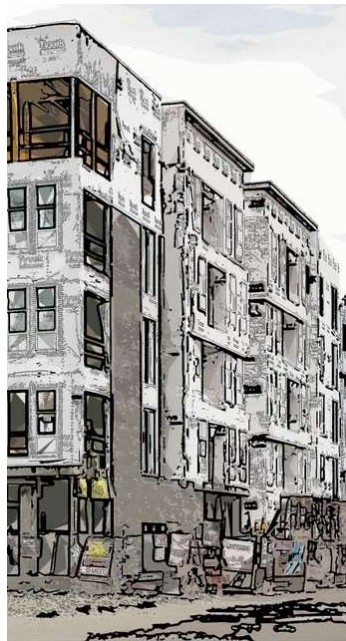
The church directory has been updated online and in paper format. If you would like an updated directory mailed to you, contact the church office. Likewise, if you are having trouble accessing the online directory, call the church office and we will help to get you connected.

## Children's Choir to "ReZOOM" January 20 (Today!)

Mari Espeland will be resuming choir time on Zoom starting this evening, Wednesday, January 20, from 5:30 to 6:00. They will continue each week until the end of April.

The program is for 3-year-olds up to second grade. Participants from last fall will automatically receive the email with links for joining these sessions. For those who wish to join in, contact Cantor Cherwien.

## Building Our Home



Last week, we publicly introduced Building Our Home to a larger audience, though *The Olive Branch* and our Mount Olive social media presence.

This is a big project - a big goal with a big impact.

Over the next few months, you can expect continued information about this initiative. We plan to use this space to answer commonly asked questions about the initiative and provide updates on our progress.

We hope that you and your family will continue to engage in this initiative, as we seek to build our home, the Twin Cities, as we literally build homes for the most vulnerable in our community.

This week... A question and answer.

### **Is affordable housing really the answer? Or do we need more shelter space?**

Steve Horsfield, Executive Director of Simpson Housing, compares housing to a pipeline. In this analogy, each section of pipe represents a category of housing. At one end, there are shelters, at the other, market rate rental housing. The middle pieces represent various levels of affordable and supportive housing. Shelters are designed to be temporary, transitional housing space. They serve as a place for people to come in off the street to find help with basic necessities, health care, and finding more stable housing. Moving people out of shelter to affordable and supportive housing makes the existing shelter beds available for those on the street or in other places not intended for human habitation.

### **The Initiative**

Working with three non-profit affordable housing developers, Beacon Interfaith, Aeon, and Alliance Housing, Mount Olive is working to build over 2100 units of affordable and supportive housing with a funding goal of 21.3 million dollars. Though our Neighborhood Ministry leadership, Mount Olive is seeking partnerships with its Twin Cities sister congregations of the Evangelical Church of America, along with other faith communities, organizations, and individuals.

### **The Ask**

If you are able, we are asking for your support in two ways.

First, financially. We have set a goal of finding 26,000 individuals, representing the active membership of our 252 Twin Cities ELCA sister congregations, to donate to this effort. With this number of participants, we would reach our goal with a donation of \$338 per person. Over the next year, are you able to contribute \$338 per person in your family? If so, you can go to the Mount Olive web site and on the donation page, we have set up a dedicated account for Building Our Home. If you prefer to send a physical check, your offering envelope pack contains a special pink Neighborhood Ministry Offering envelope.

Second, talk to others about this effort. Many in the Twin Cities have expressed concern about the lack of affordable housing for our most vulnerable. We are looking for support from individuals, businesses, really anyone who has a passion for helping ensure others have safe, affordable housing.

## Taste of Take-Out, February 7-14



**LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF**

This February we can't gather for our annual Taste of... But we can order take-out. Our mission partner focus this year will be our oldest partner, Lutheran World Relief (LWR), who is fighting the coronavirus around the world. So, let's enjoy food from four of the countries where LWR is fighting the virus.

During the week of February 7-14, we encourage you to try food from one or more of these countries—Lebanon, Somalia, Nepal, and Ecuador—and support our local wonderful immigrant chefs and restaurants.

During that week, your Missions Committee will offer education about the work of Lutheran World Relief, suggest ways that you can support that work, and collect your pictures and videos of your meals and celebrations.

In preparation, we encourage you to share your restaurant ideas from around the Twin Cities. The restaurants should feature the food of one these four countries (Lebanon, Somalia, Nepal, or Ecuador) and be open for take-out during that week. Send your suggestions to [missions@mountolivechurch.org](mailto:missions@mountolivechurch.org). Be sure to include the name of the restaurant and its address.

We'll let people know that you recommended it (unless you'd rather remain anonymous). Send your recommendations by January 31. They will appear in *The Olive Branch*.

**First recommendations:** When the Vestry was presented with this idea, they immediately recommended two Nepalese restaurants: Everest on Grand (278 Grand Ave, St. Paul) and the Himalayan Restaurant (2910 E Lake St, Minneapolis).

What would you like to recommend? We look forward to hearing from 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 three 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](mailto: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.

On February 13, they will discuss *Braiding Sweetgrass*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer, and on March 13, *Never Let Me Go*, by Kazuo Ishiguro.

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

## Regular link to the Tuesday Noon Bible Study

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>



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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](#)

