



Accent on Worship

Jim Bargmann

The Gospel reading for this upcoming Sunday, Mark 8:27-38, contains a very well-known teaching of Jesus: “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me” (verse 34). For all its familiarity though, this teaching garners no consensus as to meaning.

For the original hearers, the disciples along with a crowd of unknown size, this would have been a confusing and perhaps disturbing thought. There was no religious connotation to the cross - this teaching occurred pre-crucifixion. To these hearers, the cross was used by an occupying government as a tool for a very public form of capital punishment. And yet, there is the instruction to take up their cross and follow. One who has been killed cannot then follow. What could Jesus have meant?

Mark records the remainder of the teaching, offering some insight: “For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it.”

Short of a literal loss of life, what could it mean to lose one’s life for Jesus’ sake? Could it be a willing giving up of those things that make us comfortable for the sake of doing God’s work? Could it be giving of our monetary resources we might otherwise spend on ourselves? Could it mean giving of our time to care for another? Could it mean stepping out of our comfort zone to talk to our neighbor we have yet to meet or the fellow human on the street corner? Perhaps.

Above all, taking up our cross can be a God-led process as we invite God to show us what taking up our cross means. I do know this: it will look different for each of us - and while taking up our cross can be scary and mean some sacrifice, it can also be a source of joy as we live into the work we are called to do.

SUNDAY READINGS

Sunday, September 12
16th Sunday after Pentecost, Lect. 24 B
 Isaiah 50:4-9a
 Psalm 116:1-9
 James 3:1-12
 Mark 8:27-38

Sunday, September 19
17th Sunday after Pentecost, Lect. 25 B
 Jeremiah 11:18-20
 Psalm 54
 James 3:13—4:3; 7-8a
 Mark 9:30-37

Sunday Worship

9:00 am – Eucharist
 11:00 am – Eucharist
 (Livestreamed)

Holy Cross Day

Tuesday, September 14

Holy Eucharist at 7:00 pm

All are welcome.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Wed., September 8

10 am – Staff meeting
7:30 pm – Cantorei
rehearsal

Thurs., September 9

7 pm – New Member
Information Session
7 pm – Narcotics
Anonymous

Sat., September 11

9am -Gardening Day
10am – Book Discussion

Sun., September 12

Pentecost 16
9 & 11 am – Holy
Eucharist

Mon., September 13

7 pm – Vestry meeting

Tues., September 14

Noon – Bible Study
7 pm – Holy Cross Day
Eucharist
7 pm – NLC rehearsal

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

Sunday Morning Schedule

There are now **two worship services on Sunday morning, at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.** To be able to continue COVID-related safety measures, we ask the following:

During this time, we will continue to request R.S.V.P responses for each worship in order to allow for physical distancing in the sanctuary. We will continue to require that you wear a well-fitting mask that covers your nose and **mouth**. Please do not move the pew ropes, to help with social distancing, and **please** leave the short pews for those with wheelchairs. This is especially important to protect those who are not vaccinated, including children. Coffee hour has been temporarily suspended.

The link to RSVP for worship is <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/mountolive> . This link will be live each Wednesday for the following Sunday.

From Our Climate Partners MNIPL

“Wondering what Congress is doing on climate, and whether we might finally get meaningful federal climate policy this year? **Join a webinar Sept. 10 at 1:00 and get the scoop!**

Congress is negotiating a once-in-a-generation infrastructure and budget reconciliation package that will determine whether our country transitions to a clean energy economy in time to avoid catastrophic climate change. The bipartisan infrastructure bill included some good things, but there is much more we need included in the “budget reconciliation” deal to truly tackle climate change.

Register for a webinar with IPL a to find out what’s in the package, what we’re pushing for, and how you can help.

The webinar will feature several experts providing a 20-minute overview of the latest policy happenings. You don’t need to be a policy expert to follow along -- we will make this a general overview for a wide audience. There will be lots of time for Q&A.

We must not miss this moment. Congress must act and put the U.S. on a path to rapid decarbonization.”

A Friendly Reminder on Seating

Please note that the four cut-out pews on the aisle in the nave are reserved for those in wheelchairs and those who may accompany them.

Seating is a little trickier with the social distancing ropes in the nave, but there is room for everyone (don’t forget the transept galleries!). Please be mindful of the seat you choose and leave the spots right next to the cut-out open for those who may accompany people in a wheelchair.

Thanks.

Missions Committee News

Join Relief Efforts

Your Missions Committee is designating \$1,000 each from your mission funds for disaster relief in Haiti and Afghanistan. If you would like to join you may do so by following the links below or by designating a specially marked check or blue mission envelope (Haiti--ELCA or Afghanistan--LIRS). We are supporting Haiti through the ELCA Disaster Relief Response: <https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/Lutheran-Disaster-Response> and the Afghanistan refugees through Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services: <https://www.lirs.org>.

Common Hope Keeps Kids Moving Forward

It is getting toward the end of the school year in Guatemala, and our partners at Common Hope have some good news to report. Executive Director Sheri Blindt just returned from her first visit to Guatemala in 16 months, and here's what she has to report: ***“Less than 10% of Common Hope's students left school at the end of 2020.*** And, while preliminary estimates say as many as three times that number of students in Guatemala have or will drop out of school in 2021 - Common Hope students are bucking that trend. I applaud the efforts of our social workers and educational support teams in their success - and praise the students, themselves, for their perseverance, parents for their continued commitment to education, and sponsors for their unwavering support. I cannot emphasize enough the power of Common Hope's programs during this pandemic. ***The children and families we serve have access to much deeper resources as they navigate this pandemic because of you.***”



Garden Cycle

As the summer fades to fall our pollinator garden is still providing color, food, and habitat for Monarch butterflies. The caterpillar feasting on the milkweed will be a Monarch in time to make the journey to Mexico, while the already grown butterfly feeds on the bee balm and coneflowers.



New Members to be Received September 19

Are you interested in becoming a member of Mount Olive congregation? If so, please plan to participate in a reception of new members at the **11 a.m. liturgy on September 19**, followed by refreshments at noon. Contact the church office or speak to Pastor Crippen or Vicar Bonneville for more information.

Even if you aren't sure about joining, there will be a get-acquainted session in early September, where you can get up close and personal with members of our staff and others to learn more about our ministries, our beliefs, and our values. Watch *The Olive Branch* for details of date and time.

Gift of New Cushions for Nave

Thanks to Mount Olive member Renee Ollikain, for the gift of 18 wonderfully colorful new cushions for the Nave. These are available in the back pews, if needed or desired.



Our Summer Celebration

These are the lovely cakes from our recent celebration of the birthdays of Melba Smrcka (103) and Carolyn Mowery (101) on August 29.

It was a treat for everyone to be able to celebrate with them!



Book Discussion

The Mount Olive Book Discussion group meets on the second Saturday of each month, beginning at 10:00 am. Beginning with their next meeting on August 14 (this Saturday) they will resume meeting at church.

For the September 11 meeting, the book will be *Main Street*, by Sinclair Lewis, and for October 9, the book will be *The Darling*, by Russell Banks

Tuesday Noon Bible Study: New Link!

Since Tuesday, June 22, the Tuesday Noon Bible Study has been meeting in person again, in the West Lounge. For those who are unable to come in person, we will continue to hold the meeting over Zoom as well. Please note that we are no longer using GoToMeeting.

The link for the Tuesday noon Bible study will continue to be the same every week.

To join from your computer, tablet, or smartphone, [click here](#).



Building Our Home

While we have not featured an update to the Building Our Home initiative for the last couple weeks, that does not mean things have not been happening.

First, we continue to receive contributions from members of the Mount Olive community. So far, we have collected just over 27% of our own goal. We are incredibly thankful for the generosity of show by all who have given to this effort to make more affordable and supportive housing available in our Twin Cities community. At the same time, we need to continue pushing through to reach our entire goal. While we know we are just launching a new capital campaign, we believe strongly that we can do both of these great things at the same time. If you have not contributed to this effort, please consider a donation to Building Our Home. We are asking each active member to contribute \$338 - believing that many small contributions can make a big goal possible.

Second, our work in establishing partnerships for this effort continues. Multiple other Twin Cities congregations are working though their own decision making processes as they consider joining us in this big but doable project. And Jim Bargmann continues making presentations (both in person and by Zoom) to staff members, church councils, Vestry groups and more on a regular basis.

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. Through 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.



Choirs This Fall

Cantorei Rehearsals Begin Tonight!

Cantorei will resume rehearsals TONIGHT, Wednesday, September 8, and return to every-Sunday participation beginning this Sunday, September 12.

Rehearsals will be in the Undercroft, where we can spread out, and the new air-handling system is very effective. Masks will also be worn until deemed unnecessary by the Vestry. We are also asking that all who sing with the choir this fall have completed their vaccination as to ensure that all who come can do so safely.

Contact Cantor David Cherwien if you have questions, or if you'd like to sing with the choir, and haven't before.

Children's Choir update

Family Music Time – Sunday, September 17, 10:15 a.m. Undercroft

This will be a one-time in-person gathering in the Undercroft. (Distancing and masks will be necessary). Meet Mari in person, the Children's Zoom Choir director, hear about "God's Children Sing", pick up materials, do a little singing and movement. Children should bring their grown-ups to this meeting. Siblings are also welcome.

Starting September 22, Zoom Choir using "God's Children Sing" will continue online on Wednesdays until vaccination is available for all children. Same time: 5:30-6:00 pm. This will be only for ages 4 to grade 2 (younger siblings would be welcome to evesdrop!). Materials will be provided for use during these sessions. Sign up will begin in early September.

Grades 3 and higher will begin in-person choir at the church once vaccination is available to those ages. Because there is such a high value in actually singing together which is not possible online, there will not be an online version offered for this group. Once vaccination is possible for these ages, we will launch a new in person Wednesday schedule for both groups.

In Our Prayers

Please pray throughout the week for the following persons: Julia Adams; Joe & Elizabeth Beissel; Susan Cherwien; Charlotte Erlandson; Nancy Flatgard; Leila Froehlich; Leanna Kloempken; Mary Lee; Carla Manuel; Carolyn Mowery; Rhoda Nelson; Jerry Ostlund; Evelyn Royce; Pariann Schenk; Susan Snow; James Wilkes; *Adalyn Lerum*, relative of Nancy Anderson; *Danna Nelson, Jacques*, friends of Jim Bargmann; *Tom McCarr*, friend of Keith Bartz; *Sara Brunette*, daughter-in-law of CJ Brunette; *Arthur Kaemmer*, friend of David Bryce; *Lela Frazier*, sister of Irene Campbell; *Klarrisa Ramirez*, friend of Gretchen Campbell-Johnson; *Greg Eklund, Ryan Snelling*, son and friend of Harry & Jeanette Eklund; *Susan Bary*, friend of Judy Graves; *Dolores & David G. Gutierrez, Sr., Chris and David Gutierrez, Jr.*, parents and brothers of Consuelo Gutierrez-Crosby; *Carol Halter (missionary in Hong Kong)*, friend of Eunice Hafemeister; *Tami Huisinga*, relative of Wes Huisinga; *Craig Cunningham*, brother-in-law of Brian Jacobs; *Bob Adamson*, relative of Jerry Jones & Robbie Ross; *Roger Bradford and Robert Crumpton, Jr.*, friends of Mary Rose Kaliher; *Barbara Dahl*, sister of Carla Manuel; *Dani Olson, Harper Linguist, Steve Camper*, relatives and friend of Julie Manuel; *Jan McCuen*, mother of Matt McCuen; *Brenda Frankman*, friend of Rachel Meuret; *Martha Johnson*, sister of Rhoda Nelson and aunt of Sherry Nelson; *Kathleen Austad*, sister of Jerry Ostlund; *Sue Smith, Steve Swanson, and Mary Peterson* friends of Dwight Penas & Kathy Thurston; *Vince DeLusia*, friend of Cynthia Prosek; *Rudd Rayfield, Jolie Meshbeshier Hassler, Katelyn Bowden, Cindy Williams*, father and friends of Robin Rayfield; *Leila Jeffers*, mother of Lynn and Lisa Ruff; *Miranda Ahis*, niece of Tim Sneer; *Carrie*, friend of Paul & Melissa Stone; *David Duran*, friend of *Kevin Vazquez*; *Andrew Wiechman*, son of Grace Wiechman; *Judy Bonnes, Tommie and Susie Hunter*; *Barbara C. Johnson*, friends of Mount Olive.

At the death of: *Randy Vogt*, cousin of Grace Wiechman.

Prayers for all in the health care system here and around the world who put their lives at risk to care for those infected with COVID 19 and caring for all others who are ill as well.

Our continual prayers are offered for peace: We pray for all the world's governments, leaders, and peoples, especially for those who work overseas toward peace: *Ross Chambers*, nephew of Berta & Bob Wick; *Solveig & Philip*, daughter and son-in-law of Karen Johnson; and *Tyson Crosby*, relative of the Crosby family. (*Italics indicates non-member friends of Mount Olive.*)

About our prayer list ...

If you have submitted a name or names to be published on our prayer list, please review the list regularly, to make sure those for whom we are praying are still in need of our prayers. Contact the church office with any updates.



Mount Olive Lutheran Church
3045 Chicago Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55407

*A congregation of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

Contact Us

Phone: 612-827-5919

Fax: 612-827-4557

Web: www.mountolivechurch.org

Church Staff

Pastor – [Joseph Crippen](#)

Cantor – [David Chernien](#)

Vicar – [Andrea Bonneville](#)

Coordinator of Neighborhood

Ministries - [Jim Bargmann](#)

Administrative Assistant – [Cha Posz](#)

Sexton – [James Wilkes](#)

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