

The Olive Branch

December 20, 2023



Sunday Readings

December 24, 2023

*Fourth Sunday in Advent,
year B*

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Luke 1:46b-55

Romans 16:25-27

Luke 1:26-38

December 31, 2023

*First Sunday of Christmas,
year B*

Isaiah 61:10 – 62:3

Psalm 148

Galatians 4:4-7

Luke 2:22-40

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

Accent on Worship *Cantor David Cherwien*

Advent is coming to a close this coming weekend. Seems like we just started. The “waiting” will soon be over. (ah..., really?)

I’ve often thought that people who go through a pregnancy during Advent have a new understanding of this time of anticipation. Awaiting the new life, not really knowing how it will be. I think of hospice as a similar anticipation: awaiting the new life, not really knowing how it will be. It’s a two-sided anticipation, the part of the process at the transition (birth and death) not necessarily looked forward to, but what comes after is anticipated. New life.

Advent 4 (this Sunday morning) we focus on Mary, mother of Jesus. We encounter the words of the canticle Mary sang upon greeting her cousin, Elizabeth, who was also pregnant with John (the Baptist). These two young Jewish women lived under the oppressive force of Roman occupation. Mary, being a peasant woman, is singing that God is scattering the proud in their conceit, dethroning the mighty, raising up the lowly, filling the hungry with good things, sending the rich away empty, and showing mercy in a social world that was quite merciless. So this was a revolutionary canticle – political as well as spiritual then, and perhaps also now. Pregnant without a “father” was radical if not dangerous, as this was an era of patriarchy, placing all legal and social power in males, a society that sanctioned the legal ownership of women by men, and the legal right of every father to smother his newborn infant should he not want any children. Radical and bold.

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Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

We can also connect with this story and Mary's song in other ways than its original context. What does it mean for Christ to be born.... IN US today? ...to feel Christ leap in us and we respond with radical praise? Is this as radical for us and our context? What ways will this "pregnancy," Emmanuel ("God with us), scatter the proud, dethrone the mighty, raise up the lowly, fill the hungry with good things as Christ grows in us? How does it change anything to become more fully aware of Christ in us (which is always the case) in the anticipation of new life that follows a birth or death of a human body? What will our canticle be?

This canticle, the Magnificat, might be the biblical text most frequently set to music. Composers of sacred music have embodied these words with music since they were uttered (sung?) by Mary. The Magnificat is a regularly appointed canticle in the Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, Lutheran Church, and the Anglican Communion. Most Anglican composers have composed "Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis" (Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis settings) sung by the choir in Evening Prayer. It is appointed in the Lutheran service of Evening Prayer as well, sung by the assembly. *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* includes many settings from various points in history: ELW 234, Gregorian Chant *tonus peregrinus*, ELW 573, a 17th c. setting by Heinrich Schütz, ELW 251 to an English Folk tune arranged by 20th century composer Ralph Vaughan Williams, as well as several contemporary settings: ELW 235, 882, and the setting embedded in the Service of Evening Prayer on page 314. I count at least seven various settings in the book.

As we continue singing this song of Mary, may we ponder: How do we embody Christ in us in ways that are radical to the ways of our current cultural/political context? Can we understand in a new way the Incarnation - Christ being born in us and then in the world with our help? May we be as bold as Mary and respond: Yes.

- Cantor David Cherwien



Calendar

Wednesday, December 20

- 10:00 am Staff meeting
5:30 pm Children's Choirs supper
6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsals
7:00 pm *Advent Vespers*
7:30 pm Cantorei rehearsal

Thursday, December 21

- 6:00 p.m. Bible Study
7:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

Friday, December 22

- 7:00 pm Recovery Group

Sunday, December 24 - Fourth Sunday of Advent/Christmas Eve

- 10:00 am *Holy Eucharist, Fourth Sunday of Advent*
4:00 pm *Christmas Eve Eucharist*
9:30 pm *Christmas Eve Choral Prelude*
10:00 pm *Christmas Eve Eucharist*

Monday, December 25

- 10:00 pm *Christmas Day Festival Eucharist*
7:00 pm Monday Night WAVE (N.A.)

Tuesday, December 26

- Noon Bible Study (Zoom only)

Christmas Worship Schedule, with Revised Sundays

This year Christmas Eve lands on the same Sunday as the Fourth Sunday of Advent. For both Sunday, December 24, and Sunday, December 31, we will have a **single liturgy** in the morning, at 10:00 a.m.

Our Christmas season schedule remains the same otherwise: Eucharist at 4:00 and 10:00 p.m. Christmas Eve, 10:00 a.m. Christmas Day, 10:00 a.m. on Monday, January 1, the Name of Jesus, and Epiphany Eucharist at 7:00 p.m. Saturday, January 6.

Tuesday Noon Bible Study Link

The Tuesday Noon Bible Study is meeting in person, in the **East Assembly Room**. For those who are unable to come in person, we will continue to hold the meeting over Zoom as well.

The link for the Tuesday noon Bible study will be the same every week. To join from your computer, tablet, or smartphone, [click here](#).

Book Discussion

For their January 13 meeting, the Book Discussion Group will read *Lost Colony: The Hennepin Island Murders*, by Mount Olive member Steve Berg. For the February 10 meeting they will read *Of Human Bondage*, by W. Somerset Maugham.

The group has been using Zoom to provide remote access to the sessions. If you would like to participate in the group, you can either attend the monthly sessions which meet at the church in person or join remotely via Zoom. To join from your computer, tablet, or smart phone, [click here](#).

Midweek Advent Worship

Midweek Evening Prayer will be prayed each Wednesday evening during Advent (December. 6, 13, and 20), at 7:00 pm.

All are welcome.

Christmas Day Coffee

There will be no carry-in brunch for the 10 a.m. Christmas Day liturgy. However, if you would like to make coffee and bring in treats for after the service, you may sign up on the chart next to the coffee window in the East Assembly Room.

Church Office Closed Christmas Week

The church office will be closed December 25-29. *The Olive Branch* will not be published that week, but will resume publication with the January 3, 2024 issue. Information for that issue is due on January 2.

Pastor Crippen will be fully available by phone or email for pastoral needs, but may not be in the office regularly during this week.

Conspiracy vs. The Bible: Monday/Thursday Bible Study Continues

This month, Vicar Mildahl is leading a six-session Bible Study looking closely at common elements of modern American conspiracy theories that are drawn from a Christian worldview, such as the Devil, the end times, Jewish people, and Christian nationalism. We'll be comparing the conspiracy theory versions of these ideas with what the Bible actually says and discussing how faithful believers ought to respond and speak the truth in love.

Two identical sessions are offered each week: Mondays at noon (note the change, not Fridays) and Thursdays at 6pm. You are welcome to join in person or via Zoom. Monday participants, feel free to bring your lunch. Thursday nights will include a light supper. Contact vicar@mountolivechurch.org if you have any questions!

[Click here](#) to join the Zoom meeting for either the Monday or Thursday sessions.

Cookies, Bars, and Treats: January 7

On January 7, both coffee hours will appreciate your extra baking efforts and/or your purchase power. Bring your extra holiday treats for coffee hour! Carol Austermann and Margaret Bostelmann will gladly host!

Save the Date!

Friday, December 29, 7:00 p.m.: Grown-Up Movie Night at Mount Olive.

Start your New Year's celebration with a movie with Mount Olive friends. Movie title to be announced soon.

December Neighborhood Ministries Partner of the Month: Tubman

A statement from the Tubman website powerfully articulates their mission and purpose: "For more than 45 years, Tubman has helped people of all ages, all genders, and all cultural backgrounds struggling with relationship violence, substance abuse, mental health, and other forms of trauma. Throughout the Twin Cities, Tubman provides safe shelter, legal services, counseling, youth programming, and community education. In 2022, we helped about 17,700 people in Hennepin, Ramsey, and Washington counties and the surrounding area get the support and information they need to experience safety, hope, and healing."

Tubman has become a vital partner in the work of Mount Olive, working in areas that contrast many of our own programs and providing a valuable referral site for those struggling with relational violence and mental health issues.

Mount Olive has chosen to support each of our Partners of the Month through a yearly contribution from our budget, but on top of that, we encourage any member who wishes to contribute over and above our budgeted amount to those partners doing work in their areas of passion and concern. You can do this using your offering envelopes or our online giving system. All additional contributions to our partner of the month will be distributed to the partner for the month in which the contribution is received.

For more information about Tubman, please visit their website at www.tubman.org.

Ordination of Kyle Schiefelbein-Guerrero

Former Mount Olive member, Kyle Schiefelbein-Guerrero, will be ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada on Saturday, January 13, 2024, 3:00 pm PST.

Kyle's ordination will take place at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 1111 O'Farrell Street, San Francisco, CA 94109. He has been called to serve in his current professorship at Lutheran Theological Seminary Saskatoon.

If you are interested in attending, please RSVP at: <https://smlc.live/kylersvp>
The service will be livestreamed on that day: <https://smlc.live/kylelivestream>

Christmas and Epiphany Worship at Mount Olive

Fourth Sunday of Advent / Christmas Eve: Sunday, December 24, 2023

Holy Eucharist for the 4th Sunday of Advent at **10:00 a.m.** (note time!)

Christmas Eve Eucharist at 4:00 p.m.

Choral Prelude at 9:30 p.m.

Christmas Eve Eucharist at 10:00 p.m.

Christmas Day: Monday, December 25, 2023

Festival Eucharist at 10:00 a.m.

First Sunday of Christmas: Sunday, December 31

Holy Eucharist at 10:00 a.m.

The Name of Jesus: Monday, January 1, 2024

Holy Eucharist at 10:00 a.m.

The Epiphany of Our Lord: Saturday, January 6, 2024

Holy Eucharist at 7:00 p.m.

The Baptism of Our Lord: Sunday, January 7, 2024

Holy Eucharist at 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.

Mount Olive Lutheran Church

3045 Chicago Avenue South
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*A congregation of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

Sunday Eucharists:

8:00 & 10:45 am

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Staff

Pastor – *Joseph Crippen*

Cantor – *David Cherwien*

Vicar – *Lauren Mildahl*

Coordinator of Neighborhood Outreach
and Ministry – *Jim Bargmann*

Administrative Assistant – *Cha Posz*

*Mount Olive is a Reconciling in Christ
congregation.*

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