



The Olive Branch

February 7, 2024

Sunday Readings

February 11, 2024

*Transfiguration of Our Lord
year B*

2 Kings 2:1-12

Psalm 50:1-6

2 Corinthians 4:3-6

Mark 9:2-9

February 18, 2024

*First Sunday in Lent
year B*

Genesis 9:8-17

Psalm 25:1-10

1 Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:9-15

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

Accent on Worship

Vicar Lauren Mildahl

This Sunday we will celebrate the Transfiguration of Our Lord, which is always observed on the final Sunday before Lent. I find it an odd moment in Jesus' life and (much like the Super Bowl that will also be celebrated on Sunday) I don't think I really understand it. One of my many questions is: when Moses and Elijah appeared on the mountain and began speaking with Jesus, how did the disciples know it was them? Did they introduce themselves? Were they granted some special kind of divine knowledge?

It's not really important, but it's one of those little questions that just sort of niggles away at you once you notice it. There's another one in the first reading. In the other years of the lectionary, the account of the Transfiguration is paired with an Old Testament reading about Moses, but this is the one year we get to hear about Elijah, an eminent prophet from the time of the split kingdoms. We will hear about the very end of Elijah's ministry, when he is taken up to heaven in a whirlwind, leaving for his companion Elisha his mantle and a double share of his spirit. But how? How can Elijah leave more than he had?

It turns out, I'm not the first one to notice this. Maximus of Turin, writing in the fifth century, noticed and was amazed! "So Elijah, although he had a single spirit of holiness, left a double portion to Elisha. In an amazing way, he left more grace on earth for Elisha than he took with himself to heaven." This is the incredible abundance of the Holy Spirit - that we can leave more grace on earth than we even have! God's grace and overflowing spirit is not limited by our notions of ownership and scarcity and inheritance - it grows infinitely and all we need to do is ask.

continued on page 2



Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

Now, Elijah warns Elisha that it is a hard thing that he has asked for. God's power and goodness and love can be overwhelming when we really open ourselves up to it. We are imperfect containers to hold infinity. And that is why we have each other. My favorite part of this story is Elisha's simple insistence, despite the repeated attempts from his mentor to send him away: "I will not leave you." Elisha is there, for every step of Elijah's difficult last journey, the day Elijah knows will be his last. Elisha will not leave him. And somehow, at the end of the day, Elijah has more to give than he could have imagined.

Mathematicians show that some infinities are bigger than other infinities. When we walk together in mutual care and faithfulness, what new, bigger infinities might we encounter?

- Vicar Lauren Mildahl

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

The Youth and Family Committee would like to invite you to a Pancake Supper on Shrove Tuesday, February 13, from 5:30-7:00, in the Mount Olive Undercroft.

We will invite kids to help prepare and serve pancakes and will also have a variety of games and activity options available.

Following the Pancake Supper, we will gather to burn the palm branches from last year's Passion Sunday, to create the ashes for Ash Wednesday services the following day.

Hope to see you there!

Receiving Ashes on Ash Wednesday – a change

There are two times a year where we kneel at the altar rail: Ash Wednesday, when we receive ashes on our foreheads; and Maundy Thursday, when we receive absolution individually.

The Worship Committee has been concerned about the challenges for some of our people to climb those stairs each time, and has decided to move the kneeling to the bottom step for both of these liturgies. (A similar move was done last year with the washing of feet on Maundy Thursday.)

There will be acolytes to help any who need it, and the kneeling cushions will be across that first step. The hope is that this will enable more to participate, and also remove anxiety about navigating those steps for some. As always, those who do not kneel for health reasons will still have the choice not to kneel here.

Calendar

Wednesday, February 7

- 10:00 am Staff meeting
5:30 pm Children's Choirs supper
6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsals
7:00 pm Y2 Confirmation
7:00 pm Cantorei rehearsal

Thursday, February 8

- 5:30 pm Feminine Divine Study group
7:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

Friday, February 9

- 7:00 pm Recovery Group

Saturday, February 10

- 10:00 am Book Discussion group

Sunday, February 11 - The Transfiguration of Our Lord Taste of The Holy Land

- 8:00 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee and conversation
9:30 am Godly Play (No Adult Forum scheduled this day)
10:45 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee and conversation
Noon Taste of The Holy Land celebration meal

Monday, February 12

- 5:30 pm Family Music Time (online only)
7:00 pm Vestry meeting
7:00 pm Monday Night WAVE (N.A.)

Tuesday, February 13

- Noon Bible Study
5:30 pm Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, followed by
Burning of Palms

Attention Sunday Servants!

The Mount Olive Servant Schedule for 2nd quarter 2024 (April-June) will be published at the beginning of March. Please send any updates regarding scheduling preferences or conflicts to me by Friday, February 16.

For example, if you prefer assisting with the early or late services, or like to serve for specific holidays or other services, please let me know. Thanks!

- Greg Murphy (gregmurphy@gmail.com)

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 February 10 meeting, the Book Discussion group will read *Of Human Bondage*, by W. Somerset Maugham. For March 9, they will read *Tom Lake*, by Ann Patchett.

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 smartphone, [click here](#).



Attention Children's Choirs

A note from Laurie Richardson Johnson who will be making art with our choristers on Wednesday evenings during Lent, February 21, 28, March 6, 13, and 20:

The Land of Dreams, Songs, and Stories for Hidden Alleluia

It's almost time to say goodbye to *Alleluia* as we move toward the Lenten season. The children will recess out of the sanctuary with the Alleluia banner on the Sunday before Ash Wednesday, snake through the corridors of the church, down stairways, descending even farther until the *Alleluia* banner reaches the geothermal basement. There, in the dark, *Alleluia* will stay throughout Lent until Easter Sunday.

What is it like to wait and stay by oneself in the dark? In the quiet? Is *Alleluia* lonely? Afraid? Bored? Frustrated? How would you feel? For five Wednesdays during choir time, we will be answering these questions with our imaginations and our art—the painting and building of *The Land of Dreams, Songs, and Stories for Hidden Alleluia*. Each chorister will be making their own three-dimensional offering (dreams, songs, stories) to our special hidden land. We'll put them all together as a secret gift to *Alleluia* as *Alleluia* waits to be claimed and brought into the light and new life of Easter. This art work will be an offering for our Mt. Olive community too. Perhaps we can help one another during times when we might feel that hope is hard to find.

The Land of Dreams, Songs, and Stories for Hidden Alleluia is about listening to the voice who knows us best, and sharing sparks of hope, joy, light, and glimpses of the new life to come.

Choristers, please wear comfortable clothes, bring a paint shirt, and your crackling imaginations. See you soon!

Lent Begins.

Ash Wednesday, February 14

Holy Eucharist
at Noon and 7:00 p.m.

All are welcome.

February Neighborhood Ministries Partner of the Month:

Walk-In Counseling Center

Walk-In Counseling Center provides “free, easily accessible mental health counseling to people with urgent needs and few service options.” Counselors work with people struggling with depression, anxiety, chemical dependency, domestic violence, and many other emotional and interpersonal concerns.

Mount Olive has chosen to support each of our Partners of the Month through a yearly contribution from our budget, and often, like our partner this month, we also volunteer in support of their work. On top of those financial and labor contributions, we encourage any member who wishes to donate 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 the work of Walk-In Counseling Center, please visit their website at <https://www.walkin.org>.

Upcoming Adult Forums

Feb. 11: This Sunday, February 11 we will have an opportunity work to understand, learn, and expand our thinking about the Holy Land, our partnerships there, and the current situation (see announcement on page 6).

February 18 & 25: “White and Delightful: Christian Missionaries and Cultural Chaos in Dakota Indigenous Communities, 1833-1863.”

This two-part series will provide an overview of the ways in which Christian missionaries likely hastened the cultural destruction of Dakota peoples in Minnesota and contributed to the tragic U.S. Dakota War of 1862. Discussion of how Mount Olive members might respond to the call for justice for our Indigenous neighbors will be part of the presentation.

Last Call for Palms!

If you have palm branches in your home from last year’s Palm Sunday liturgies, please bring them to church and place them in the basket provided in the narthex.

These branches will be burned on Shrove Tuesday (February 13) to make ashes for this year’s Ash Wednesday liturgies on February 14.

pray
Learn Hope

Taste of
Palestine and Israel
Sunday, February 11

Adult Forum 9:30

Dinner with food from the region following the
second liturgy

Share Listen
Understand

This Sunday: A Time to Listen and Learn

This Sunday during the Taste of Palestine and Israel Education Hour we will have a chance to listen and learn from both a Palestinian, Ashraf Ashkar, and Sami Rahamin, a 2nd generation Israeli Jew.

These men are giving us a great gift as they speak together of their stories. We will listen intently and work to understand these differing perspectives.

Thank you to those who submitted questions for these men to consider. Join us this Sunday. And then, after our second liturgy, come to the Undercroft to share a meal that so many of you have made for us, a meal from both cultures, a meal of sharing and hope.

Congregational Life Updates

Save the Date: Movie Night. Join your Mount Olive friends for movie on **Friday, February 23, at 7 p.m.** Hopefully, we'll be able to access *The Holdovers*, nominated for an Academy Award in the Best Acting category. Popcorn and beverages provided.

Prayer Chain: Congregational Life would like to re-energize the Prayer Chain. This group of folks commits to regularly praying for those folks on our prayer list and also responding quickly to prayer needs identified by the staff. If you're interested in joining "The Chain," email conglife@mountolivechurch.org.

Coffee, coffee, coffee: The coffee hour sign up list looks pretty empty. Please sign up to bring some goodies and serve them, or if you aren't able to serve, bring some goodies anyway. There is generally someone available to help serve and make coffee. Thanks!

Mount Olive Lutheran Church

3045 Chicago Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55407

*A congregation of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

Sunday Eucharists:

8:00 & 10:45 am

Contact Us

Phone: 612/827-5919

Fax: 612/827-4557

Web: www.mountolivechurch.org

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.*

In This Issue:

- **Accent on Worship – Vicar Lauren Mildahl**
- **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper: Tues., Feb. 13, 5:30 pm**
- **Palms being Received for Ash Wednesday services**
- **Congregational Life Updates**
- **Adult Forum Schedule**
- **Neighborhood Ministries Partner of the Month:
Walk-In Counseling Center**
- **Taste of Palestine and Israel, This Sunday!**