



The Olive Branch

April 10, 2024

Accent on Worship

Jim Bargmann

The Second Reading for this week is one of the most beautiful descriptions of what a loving faith community can look like. And one of the most aggravating.

Can you imagine a reality where this became the lived reality for our community, or dare I say, our society again? No private ownership of possessions, no one lacking for basic needs, generosity beyond comprehension in our modern, capitalist society.

There is a place and time for debate about the role government, the structure of society, and economic models, certainly. But I don't know that this passage speaks to those issues. Every indication is that the early Christian community set up this structure on their own, voluntarily, operating within the structure of society and government as it existed at the time.

Many Native cultures, prior to colonization, shared many of these same characteristics. It is a shame that they too seem to have been forced to give up this way of structuring society for a supposedly better way.

And for me, this is the aggravating part. As much as I would love to live in a community like this, even be a part of starting, designing, setting up a community like this, I struggle to understand how it would be possible. Far too many I know simply struggle to find the resources to pay for the absolute basics needed for life - shelter, food, clothing. Many would love to be more generous and share what they have with others, but there simply isn't anything left to share. Even simply having a place to live means either owning a piece of land on which to build a home or paying someone else who owns the land for the right to live there for a time. There really are no other options.

Certainly, there are bright spots. A number of years ago, inspired by this very passage, Pastor Crippen set up the Common Good Fund to support those in our community who find themselves struggling financially. Many beautiful things have been done with the money shared by members of our community through that fund.

continued on page 2

Sunday Readings

April 7, 2024

*Second Sunday of Easter,
year B*

Acts 4:32-35

Psalm 133

1 John 1 – 2:2

John 20:19-31

April 14, 2024

*Third Sunday of Easter,
year B*

Acts 3:12-19

Psalm 4

1 John 3:1-7

Luke 24:36b-48

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

Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

And this community has given generously to help build and maintain affordable and supportive housing in our neighborhoods. And time and time again, through the structure and programs of Mount Olive, this community shares its financial resources with those struggling to afford diapers, housing, food, diapers, and more.

But could we do more? Is a community like the one described in this passage possible? What would that look like? How would it be set up? Could something like this even operate in our current societal structure, similar to this early Christian community? Or would society need to be reshaped to even allow this to exist, much less thrive? And what would that look like? And what would be the process to get to that place?

I admit I have many more questions than answers. But I am inspired by this passage. I am inspired by the beautiful description of this early faith community and its impact on the people connected to it. And I am excited about the possibility of exploring these and other questions with you all. Because I really do believe we have the ability to do great things in our world just as this early faith community did in theirs. Let's keep the conversations going.

- Jim Bargmann

Visit to the Dakotah History Museum

Visit Hocokata Ti, the Dakotah history museum near Shakopee. Saturday, April 20, 9 a.m.-approximately 1 p.m. This is a new museum which uses Dakotah voices to tell the story of Dakotah people. It is an excellent way to gain more understanding of our neighbors and those whose traditional homeland we occupy.

We will start with coffee/tea and muffins at Mount Olive to give a brief introduction, then carpool to the museum. **This event requires a sign-up, with a deadline of April 17.** Use the following link to sign up, or call the church office. There is a limit of 30 participants. The cost of admission is listed below. If cost is a barrier for you, please speak with Pr. Crippen or Vicar Mildahl, who can offer confidential assistance. Sign up here: <https://tinyurl.com/hocokatati>

Museum admission:

General: \$8.00

Senior and K-12 Students: \$5.00

Children under 5: Free

New Members to be Received April 28

New members will be received into the Mount Olive congregation on **Sunday, April 28.**

If you are interested in joining, please contact Eric at evangelism@mountolivechurch.org, or the church office at welcome@mountolivechurch.org.

The Olive Branch

Calendar

Wednesday, April 10

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

Thursday, April 11

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

Friday, April 12

- 7:00 pm Recovery Group

Saturday, April 13

- 10:00 am Book Discussion group

Sunday, April 14 - Third Sunday of Easter

- 8:00 am *Holy Eucharist*
9:30 am Godly Play / Adult Forum
10:45 am *Holy Eucharist*
Noon Advocacy Training
1:00 pm *Interment: Roger Mollett*
4:00 pm MFA Event: Angelica Encore Choral Ensemble

Monday, April 15

- 6:00 pm Bible Study (Book of Amos)
5:30 pm Family Music Time (online only)
7:00 pm Vicar Committee meeting
7:00 pm Monday Night WAVE (N.A.)

Tuesday, April 16

- Noon Bible Study
6:00 pm Neighborhood Ministry Committee meeting
6:00 pm Bible Study (Book of Amos)

Congregation Meeting

The semi-annual meeting of the Mount Olive congregation will be held on **Sunday, April 28, following the second liturgy**. The primary purpose of this meeting is to elect leaders to the Vestry. All voting members are encouraged to attend!

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 April 13 meeting, the Book Discussion group will read *Mr. Ives' Christmas*, by Oscar Hijuelos, and for May 11 they will read *Everything Sad is Untrue*, by Daniel Nayeri.

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](#).

Death Cafe Follow-up

What is Death Cafe? You may be aware of the sessions held recently during the Educational Hour at Mount Olive, and perhaps not. In brief, this is a gathering of people who come together over coffee and cake to share, conversationally, anything related to death. Since death is not an easy topic to discuss but also one that none of us will escape, it is one that is deeply personal and often put aside until "another day." Perhaps this is of interest to you. I am willing to talk with anyone about their ideas, questions, concerns, and also how to get a small group started either in church or a private home. I have been a part of a Death Cafe group for over 4 years now. The advantages are beyond describing here. If you are interested, please get in touch with me. Phone: 612-306-8872, or email marilyn.gebauer@gmail.com.

- Marilyn Gebauer

Supporting Augusta Victoria Hospital

Using your Taste of Palestine and Israel offerings and our emergency fund, your Global Ministry Committee is sending an additional \$1,000 to support Augusta Victoria Hospital, our partner in Jerusalem. Augusta-Victoria-Hospital is calling for donations to support the additional accommodation cost of patients and staff from Gaza and the West Bank, who cannot return home, and for medical supplies to treat people injured in the conflict. The hospital is offering accommodation for patients who need it, keeping the patients for hemodialysis (kidney treatment), and especially almost all the children and their families from the West Bank who receive hemodialysis in the hospital, to guarantee the continuity of their treatment. Those receiving hemodialysis need a session every other day, and if they miss it, they will die. It's a life-saving treatment. The hospital is also expanding its telehealth oncology program to assist cancer patients in both Gaza and the West Bank. If you wish to further support Augusta Victoria Hospital you may do so with a donation to Mount Olive especially marked for Augusta Victoria or through their website at <https://avh.org/support-us>.

Six-Week Bible Study on the Book of Amos

"The lion has roared; who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken; who can but prophesy?"

In April and May, Vicar Mildahl is leading a six-session Bible Study exploring the poetic and prophetic Book of Amos. Two identical sessions are offered each week: **Mondays at noon** and **Tuesdays at 6pm**. You are welcome to join either session in person or via Zoom. Tuesday nights will include a light supper (feel free to bring your own lunch on Mondays).

Contact vicar@mountolivechurch.org if you have any questions!

Schedule:

April 8/9 - Amos and the Bible	May 6/7 - Chapters 7-9
April 15/16 - Chapters 1-3 (Skip April 22/23)	May 13/14 - Amos and Sundays
April 29/30 - Chapters 4-6	May 20/21 - Amos in the World

[Click here](#) to join any session via Zoom.

Adult Forums

April 14: “Demystifying the Work of People of Faith in the Political Process”

Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry Jim Bargmann will lead us through a conversation about how we as people of faith can engage in the political process from grass-roots community organizing through the actual passage of a bill in the Legislature. The conversation will include thoughts about the actual process itself, along with an examination of the ethical and legal issues around communities of faith engaging in politics at all.

Note: This forum will be intentionally paired with an exciting “Part 2.” For those interested in further dialog and training around community organizing and advocacy work, please plan to stay after the 10:45 am liturgy that day when Katie Dillon, Executive Director for Align Minneapolis will teach us more about what it means to work for societal change through the political process. Lunch will be provided.

Please note that either of these events will be appropriate for anyone over the age of 12. Young people, even before they reach voting age, can engage in this work in a powerful way and would be welcome and encouraged to attend.

April 21: “Community, Agency, & Accountability: Centering young people in Restorative Practices,” facilitated by Cynthia Prosek, RJCA Executive Director, and Jena Brune, Youth Program Circle Coordinator.

What changes when we center youth voice in community and decision making? Restorative Justice Community Action (RJCA) is one of Neighborhood Ministry’s supported programs. RJCA will share what they have been learning, doing, and how they have been growing as they bring youth voice forward in Restorative Practices. They will discuss three of their active youth programs: Community Conference, the Youth Restorative Justice Disposition Program, and the Restorative Practices Youth Leadership Cohort. Learn about ways Mount Olive can continue to engage with and support RJCA.

April 28: “Two Banks of the Same River: Why Indigenous Rights & Climate Justice Are Intertwined,” presented by Johan Baumeister, Congregational Organizer for Climate Justice for the Minneapolis Area Synod

Join us for a conversation about the EcoFaith Network of the Minneapolis Area Synod and our collective efforts on climate justice. We’ll focus especially on the connections between the history of energy systems and Native peoples in Minnesota. We’ll connect the ELCA’s social statements to the present and discuss opportunities to chart a just future.

Adult Forums on YouTube

Please note that the recordings of several Adult Forum presentations from 2023 and 2024 have recently been uploaded to the Mount Olive YouTube channel. You can find them in the “Adult Forum Presentations from Mount Olive Lutheran Church Minneapolis” Playlist.

<https://www.youtube.com/@MountOliveMinneapolis/playlists>



Angelica Encore Choral Ensemble: “Lessons in Nature” This Sunday, April 14 at 4:00 pm

The Angelica Encore Choral Ensemble is eager to share this powerful music with you. As we are surrounded by beauty every day, we are reminded about what we learn from the natural world: wonder, reverence, resilience, concern, and gratitude.

Come experience the sound of wolves, water glasses, and beautiful choral anthems about nature and our fragile earth!

April Neighborhood Ministry Partner of the Month: *Lake Street Council*

The Lake Street Council is a non-profit organization built to support the diverse community of residents and businesses that call Lake Street home. Lake Street Council does this through programs that support entrepreneurs starting new businesses and grants to help existing businesses thrive. They also work to beautify the streetscape, engage local businesses in policy work that affects the corridor, and encourage new development that aligns with goals of the street and community.

Mount Olive has chosen to support each of our Partners of the Month through a yearly contribution from our budget, and often, like our partners 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 the Lake Street Council, please visit their website at lakestreetcouncil.org.

Vestry Meeting Summary – March 11, 2024

- Youth Space
 - A short-term youth space has been identified
 - Work on a longer term solution will aim to identify a permanent space by September 2024
- Insurance Review Update
 - Our insurance company, Church Mutual has okayed funds for the repair of the retaining wall in the front of the church
 - There's a suggestion to get an insurance agent for the church
 - The church's flat roof needs to be repaired this summer
- New Vestry Committee Members
 - New member to the Stewardship Committee – Amy Thompson
 - New member to Property Committee – Jim Johnson
 - This year's audit team – Rachel Organist and Hannah Rivard
- Semi Annual Congregational Meeting
 - April 28, 2024 following the second liturgy
 - On the Agenda:
 - Ballot of proposed Vestry members
 - Announce amount of Mount Olive Foundation gift
 - Review of the budget and monetary giving
 - Report on Library Project
 - Other items to be determined
- Library Project proposal:
 - Vicar Mildahl presented a plan from the work of the Library Committee.
 - Committee's goal is to align aspects of the library with the ministry of Mount Olive
- Pastor Crippen has met with three candidates for next year's Vicar position
- Vicar Mildahl will be offering a Bible Study on the book of Amos after Easter
- Committee Reports
 - Worship
 - Music and Fine Arts Concert – April 14
 - Bach Tag – June 1 and 2
 - Neighborhood Ministry
 - Looking at the possibility of having a Volunteer Appreciation Event
 - Education
 - Godly Play Coordinator position still open

Easter Message from our Presiding Bishop

Our Presiding Bishop, Elizabeth Eaton, has returned from her leave of absence. For that we are grateful, and give thanks to God for her service, as well as for the ministry of Bp. Michael Burk, who served in her absence.

As is her custom, Presiding Bishop Eaton has prepared an Easter message for the ELCA. The text is below. If you would like to watch the video version, here is the link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7PcfM141gIQ>

Easter 2024

“So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone for they were afraid.” That’s where the Gospel of Mark originally ended. And it just seems so odd to me. It’s so abrupt. I mean, the women had seen the angel. He’d announced that Jesus was raised from the dead, and then he tells them all this good news and wants them to go on their way. And they just are not going to say a single word.

There are three words in that passage that really stand out for me, especially in the Greek. One is fear – *phobos*. We get phobia from that. The other one is amazement – *ekstasis*. We get ecstasy from that. And the other one has to do with being seized. It actually means “being possessed.” So we take a look at these women, and they’ve had this miraculous appearance by an angel. They’ve heard the good news that Jesus has raised from the dead, and they’re too afraid to do anything about it, and they just are going to be silent. It seems that nothing changed. They came to take care of Jesus’ dead body because on the Sabbath they could not work. But on the first day of the week, they were there. They have this announcement, and then it’s all the same.

Sometimes I think we feel like nothing’s changed. Sometimes I think that the events in our country, in our church, around the world are just so terrifying and so overwhelming that it seems like the resurrection really didn’t make a difference. But these three words really say something about the women, and I think about us and, most especially, about Easter. When they said that they were filled with amazement – this is this ecstasy, *ekstasis* – they were really standing. It means literally standing in a different place. So though they were still in the tomb and they hadn’t reacted yet, nevertheless, everything had changed. And because of the resurrection, we, all of us, are standing in a different place. The whole of creation is standing in a different place. And the word for fear, *phobos*, phobia we get from that. But it’s really a sense of trembling in the presence of God, of awe that they were actually filled with awe – not paralyzed by fear but filled with awe. And I hope this Eastertide and all year round, we have a sense of the presence of God that fills us with awe.

And it also says that they were seized with fear. Well, the word means “possessed.” And yes, we believe that in baptism because of the resurrection, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit and we now are all Spirit-possessed.

When things seem to be staying the same, when things seem to be happening and coming at us so quickly, I think it’s very important to take time to be a little amazed, to be standing in a different place, to have a sense of this awe and trembling before the Lord, and to allow ourselves to be possessed by the Spirit, who will give us power and courage in these times.

My favorite hymn is “Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song.” It’s ELW 808. And the last verse goes like this: “I fear in the dark and the doubt of my journey; but courage will come with the sound of his steps by my side. And with all of the family Jesus saved by his love, we’ll sing to his dawn at the end of our journey.”

Be well, dear church. Happy Easter.

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Easter 2024

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

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**
- **MFA Event: Sunday, April 14, 4:00 pm:
Angelica Encore Choral Ensemble**
- **Congregational Meeting: Sunday, April 28, Noon**
- **New Member Reception: Sunday, April 28**
- **April Adult Forums**
- **Neighborhood Ministries Partner of the Month:**
- **Supporting Augusta Victoria Hospital**
- **Easter Message from Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton**