



The Olive Branch

March 19, 2025

Accent on Worship

Robert Farlee

Sunday Readings

March 23, 2025

Third Sunday in Lent, year C

Isaiah 55:1-9

Psalm 63:4:1-8

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Luke 13:1-9

March 30, 2025

Fourth Sunday in Lent, year C

Joshua 5:9-12

Psalm 32

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

As we all know, the Mount Olive congregation produces wonderful singing – that has been a hallmark of our worship for as long as we can remember, along with insightful preaching and rich liturgy. But something that can get overlooked in the focus on hymnody is the role that non-vocal music can play. At Mount Olive, purely instrumental music is primarily heard in the prelude and postlude. And while some may think of that as purely decorative, it can be a worshipful expression on its own, even without words. Sometimes that can be so through the quality of the music itself – whether a piece is soaring, lyrical, or more challenging in character, it can express important truths just by the way its tones engage our minds and emotions.

But there are also musical works that, though purely instrumental themselves, bear with them the added dimension of being based on a hymn or other piece with words. Those are usually called chorale or hymn preludes. Even though the words aren't being heard, the melody can remind us of that text. At least, that was the intention of the composer. Interestingly, though, when the composer is someone with the mastery of a Bach, the music can speak to us even if we don't know the words of the chorale it is based on.

These were some of my thoughts as I considered what preludes to play in this Lenten season. Some of the most deeply beautiful chorale preludes are based on Lenten hymns, probably because in Lent we consider some of the deepest truths of our relationship with God and fellow humans, including our failings and our utter need for God's grace. Throughout this season, then, you will be hearing gorgeous preludes that communicate profoundly using no words, works by Johannes Brahms, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and of course Johann Sebastian Bach. I would point especially to this coming Sunday's prelude, one that I consider to be among Bach's most heartbreakingly beautiful: "O Mensch, bewein dein Sünde groß" ("O Human, Mourn Your Great Sin"). I think you, too, will be moved.

- Robert Farlee

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

Upcoming Adult Forums

March 23: Mount Olive member Nancy Anderson will lead a presentation and discussion about the Iona Community.

March 30 and April 6: Mount Olive member Tom Schattauer will present a 2-part series on the Rites of Triduum and their liturgical history.

NO Adult Forum April 13 and 20 (Passion Sunday and Easter)

Godly Play Themes for This Week

As we move through Lent, the Godly Play circles will be hearing about the ministry of Jesus through different stories. Godly Play Circle 1 will hear about Jesus and Zacchaeus. Godly Play will Continue considering Three Key Moments in Jesus' ministry.



All children ages 3-Grade 1 are welcome to Circle One, and children in grades 2-5 are welcome to Circle Two.

Holy Week, Triduum, and Easter at Mount Olive

Monday-Wednesday, April 14-16: Monday-Wednesday in Holy Week
+ Daily Prayer at Noon, in the side chapel of the nave, near the columbarium

Thursday, April 17: Maundy Thursday
+ Holy Eucharist, Noon
+ Holy Eucharist, with Washing of Feet, 7:00 pm

Friday, April 18: Good Friday
+ Stations of the Cross, Noon
+ Adoration of the Cross, 7 pm

Saturday, April 19: Holy Saturday
+ The Easter Vigil, 8:30 pm, followed by a festive reception

Sunday, April 20: The Resurrection of Our Lord/Easter Day
+ ONE Festival Holy Eucharist at 10 am (note change in Sunday schedule!)

The Olive Branch

Calendar

Wednesday, March 19

9:00 am Staff meeting
Noon *Midweek Lenten Eucharist*, followed by Soup Luncheon
5:30 pm Children's Choirs supper
6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsals
6:00 pm Soup supper
7:00 pm *Midweek Vespers*
7:35 pm Cantorei rehearsal

Thursday, March 20

9:30 am *Morning Prayer*
7:00 pm MIRAC meeting
7:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

Friday, March 21

10am-5pm Cantor Call Committee activities
7:00 pm Recovery Group

Sunday, March 23 - The Third Sunday in Lent

8:00 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee and conversation
9:30 am Adult Forum/Godly Play/Youth Conversation
10:45 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee and conversation

Monday, March 24

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

Tuesday, March 25

9:00 am Diaper Depot staff meeting
Noon Bible Study

Tuesday Noon Bible Study Link

The Tuesday Noon Bible Study meets weekly in person in the East Assembly Room. For those who are unable to come in person, the Bible Study is held 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

On April 12 the discussion will travel to Nigeria to consider *Under the Udala Trees* by Chinelo Okparanta. In May you can join in learning about Eileen Blair, author and wife of George Orwell, as we read *Wifedom*, *Mrs. Orwell's Invisible Life* by Anna Funder.

Everyone is invited to join whenever you are able, at 10 a.m. in the library, usually on the second Saturday of the month. 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 Lenten Worship

Wednesdays in Lent

Holy Eucharist at Noon,
followed by Soup Luncheon

Vespers at 7:00 pm,
preceded by Soup Supper at 6 pm

All are welcome.

Lenten Pilgrimage

The Stations of the Cross are a long-standing Christian tradition in the West. Dating from the thirteenth century and promulgated by Franciscans, this devotional practice emerged as a way of visiting the sacred sites of Christ's Passion when travel to the Holy Land wasn't possible. Here at Mount Olive, we've celebrated a Stations of the Cross liturgy at noon on Good Friday for many years.

This year, visual representations of our nine stations will accompany us in the nave throughout Lent. They come from different artists of varying backgrounds and eras representing the richness of Christian thought and practice. Embracing our assembly, these pieces wrap us in the mystery of our salvation. They call us to the wonder of Christ's passion and to solidarity with all victims of violence and oppression.

When you have a moment, you might take this art in — one piece at a time or by walking the Way of the Cross in prayer, the Way that leads through Death to Life.

Action Alert from your Global Ministry Committee and the ELCA

Food aid and the farm bill: In the final months of 2024 we asked Mount Olive members and friends to urge their U.S. senators and representatives to resist major cuts in domestic and global food aid in a new farm bill. We acknowledged that there was an increasing likelihood that the farm bill — which includes a myriad of topics and is renewed every five years — would be left to the new Congress. And that's what happened.



Now an ELCA "Action Alert" says House Republicans have proposed cuts of \$230 billion over nine years to Department of Agriculture programs, with most to come from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, which serves some 40 million people. The ELCA says the proposed cuts are in early stages and that top GOP agriculture leaders have tried to push back against the cuts.

Not mentioned in the ELCA's alert, but part of the bigger picture, is what appears in the media to be the recent near-decimation — at least for now — of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which for decades has provided food and other aid to people around the globe. It never hurts to remind our [U.S. representatives and senators](#) that there are many of us who care deeply about providing food security — and believe it should transcend partisan politics. You can phone, email, or put pen to paper. You can make your voice heard through the [ELCA Action Alert](#). We can also pray for all who need food aid, and for those who can make it happen.

March Neighborhood Ministries Partner of the Month:

Sabathani Community Center and Community Emergency Services

In March, we highlight two of our partners that work on issues of food insecurity in our south Minneapolis community as a part of the Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign, a state-wide initiative intended to bring together “organizations, businesses, faith communities, and individuals” to raise awareness about the issue of food insecurity and support for local food programs.

“Sabathani Community Center is one of Minnesota’s oldest African American-founded nonprofits... [and] helps equip approximately 32,000 South Minneapolis residents annually” through their food shelf, clothes closet, seniors programs, workforce initiatives, support for school- age children, and more.

Community Emergency Service or CES, works to alleviate hunger and food insecurity through an on-site food shelf, food delivery programs, a partnership with Meals on Wheels, and its unique Ani-Meals program, providing food for pets and service animals.

Mount Olive has chosen to support each of our Partners of the Month through a yearly contribution from our budget. On top of those financial 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.

In addition, we will be collecting donations of non-perishable food items in the cart located in the West Assembly to be divided between our two food shelf partners. However, for those who are able, we strongly encourage monetary donations. Because our food shelf partners have access discounts and bulk purchase opportunities not available to regular consumers, monetary donations allow our partners to purchase much more food than if we were to purchase the same food through a retail store.

For more information about the work of the Sabathani Community Center, please visit their website at sabathani.org. For more information about CES, please visit cesmn.org.

Special Congregation Meeting to Call a Cantor

The Vestry has called for a **special congregational meeting on Sunday, April 13, 2025**, following the second liturgy that day (Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday). The sole purpose for this meeting is to consider a candidate for Cantor of Mount Olive and vote whether to call that person.

The final interviews for the position are still to come, at the end of this week. That means at this point we do not have a candidate to bring forward. This meeting is called in advance of a decision by the Call Committee because the constitution requires three weeks’ notice of a congregational meeting. If the Call Committee does not decide to bring forward a name from these final interviews, then the April 13 meeting will be cancelled.

Please note that the semi-annual meeting of the congregation is set for April 27. More to follow.

Lingering on Liturgy

Liturgy can be seen as a living, breathing process, a “work of the people.” In that spirit, have you noticed slightly longer silent periods interwoven into liturgy recently? The worship committee wants to share our inspirations for these.

Some years ago in an adult forum, late and beloved Mount Olive member Susan Cherwien shared many names of and titles for God found in scripture; she emphasized since-suppressed feminine titles and images for God that permeate scripture and sacred tradition. One such is *Ru’ah*, the Hebrew word for breath, wind, air, and spirit, sometimes used in connection with the Holy Spirit.

Susan reminded us about Moses asking who to tell the people sent him. God’s answer: “I am that I am.” In Hebrew, *ehyeh asher ehyeh*. An anglicized pronunciation might look like eh-YEH ah-SHARE eh-YEH. We invite you to say it aloud.

Some Jewish and Christian thinkers have noticed that it sounds like breath. Breathing out, in, and out again. Exhale. Inhale. Exhale. This breath enlivens not only our lungs, but our entire bodies. It is not unlike saying Ru (in) ah (out). Spirit of God; taking in, receptive, listening; moving out, active, speaking. Breath imagery for God is found deep within our traditions' origin languages.

Like our bodies, our liturgy also needs breath to live. Each of our corporate actions takes an inhale and an exhale. Sacred silence in between our actions holds space for these breaths to fill, to keep our corporate body fed, inspired, and connected to the rhythm of the very breath of God. Each action, a reception, and from reception, another action.

The Worship Committee invites you to experiment with the silences, newly elongated, after each scripture reading in liturgy and now at Lent at the end of worship. What feeds you in these silences? A reception of the Word? Anticipation of our actions as Body of Christ? Or a simple, nurturing focus on your breath, this manifestation of Spirit in each of us and in all of us?

- Teresa Rothausen, Andrew Stoebig



Friday Fish Fry

Mount Olive folks enjoying the fish fry at Our Lady of Peace last Friday. The next stop on the Fish Fry pilgrimage is this coming Friday at [Nativity of Mary Catholic Church in Bloomington](#).

Mount Olive Lutheran Church

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

Sunday Eucharist: 8 & 10:45 am

Contact Us

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On the Web: mountolivechurch.org

Staff

Pastor – *Joseph Crippen*

Interim Organist – *Robert Farlee*

Interim Choir Director – *Andrew Stoebig*

Vicar – *Natalie Wussler*

Administrative Assistant – *Cha Posz*

Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry –
Jim Bargmann

Sexton – *Jose Morocho*

*Mount Olive is a Reconciling in Christ
congregation.*

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