

MARCH 2021

BELIEVING, BELONGING, BECOMING

MOUNT OLIVET
MESSENGER



mtolivet.org

JOIN US

M MPLS CAMPUS

5025 Knox Ave S
 Minneapolis, MN 55419
 612.926.7651

W WEST CAMPUS

7150 Rolling Acres Rd
 Victoria, MN 55386
 952.767.1500

If you would like to receive a large print copy of the *Messenger*, please contact Andrea Brown at andrea@mtolivet.org or 612.767.2209.

MARCH 7

**THE CANAANITE
 WOMAN'S FAITH:
 DETERMINATION**

Matthew 15:21-28

Watch the worship service at mtolivet.org. Radio Broadcast on WDGY 740AM at 11am.

SERMON Pastor Freeman

MARCH 14

**PETER'S CONFESSION
 AND REBUKE: HUMILITY**

Matthew 16:13-28

Watch the worship service at mtolivet.org. Radio Broadcast on WDGY 740AM at 11am.

SERMON Pastor Lose

MARCH 21

**TRANSFIGURATION:
 RESILIENCE "LISTEN TO
 HIM"**

Matthew 17:1-13

Watch the worship service at mtolivet.org. Radio Broadcast on WDGY 740AM at 11am.

SERMON Pastor Ruud

MARCH 28

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Matthew 21:1-11

Watch the worship service at mtolivet.org. Radio Broadcast on WDGY 740AM at 11am.

M 9 & 11am

SERMON Pastor Hammersten

W 9 & 11am

SERMON Pastor Freeman

WEDNESDAYS

OPEN PRAYER TIME

M W 10am-12noon

Each Wednesday morning our sanctuaries will be opened for personal prayer time, reflection, and meditation.

M W 6-7pm

First Wednesday of the month our sanctuaries will be open for personal prayer time, reflection, and meditation.

**IN-PERSON HOLY
 COMMUNION**

M W 12noon & 7pm

A short in-person communion service will be offered, the first Wednesday of each month. Registration is required and seating is limited to 40 persons. Register at mtolivet.org or by calling 612.767.2264.

LENTEN MIDWEEK SERVICES

MARCH 3: PASTOR FREEMAN Prayer

MARCH 10: PASTOR RUUD Almsgiving

MARCH 17: PASTOR HAMMERSTEN Bible Study

MARCH 24: PASTOR MACLEAN Service

MARCH 31: PASTOR KALLAND Care, Comfort, and Consolation

Faith Practices

Worship videos will be available at mtolivet.org/together-at-mount-olivet and emailed to our subscriber lists. These brief services will include our Mount Olivet Pastors explaining some history and importance of our common faith practices each week. We'll explore traditions like prayer, bible study, and service, all of which are marks of our discipleship.

FAITH ALIVE WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

are available at mtolivet.org and during our radio broadcast. These 20 minute devotions are hosted by Senior Pastor Lose and offer insight into biblical teachings. Currently the devotions are focused on the book of Philippians and are accompanied with music as well as a time for prayer & reflection. Please enjoy these devotions anytime by visiting mtolivet.org/faith-alive

ONLINE HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE

is available at mtolivet.org anytime. Pastor Kalland will lead you through a brief but meaningful Holy Communion service. Personal communion elements are available for pick up during Wednesday Open Prayer from 10am-12noon at the Mpls Campus. You are also always welcome to use elements you already have at your home.

Re-Discovering the Costly Grace of Discipleship

In 1937, a young German pastor and theologian by the name of Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote a short book containing his reflections on what it means to be a disciple of Jesus according to the Sermon on the Mount. That book, known today as *The Cost of Discipleship*, was originally titled *Nachfolge*, best translated as “the act of following.” Bonhoeffer chose that word to emphasize that true discipleship is not just listening, learning, or knowing – all words employed when you imagine that a disciple is primarily someone’s student – but is fundamentally an act of following, a disciplined attempt to live as Jesus lived.

It was, as I mentioned, 1937, four years after Adolph Hitler was named Chancellor of Germany. One of the first things the Nazis did under Hitler was to create a new “German Christian” church that included and promoted congregations and church leaders who professed their allegiance to an ardent German nationalism that labelled as an enemy anyone who was not “purely” German or did not support Nazi policies of division and exclusion. Lots of people and congregations flocked to this new organization because it provided a clear identity and made them feel important and safe amid a turbulent time. Against this backdrop, Bonhoeffer drew a distinction between what he called “cheap grace” and “costly grace.”

Cheap grace, according to Bonhoeffer, “is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.” In contrast, Bonhoeffer believed that the grace offered by Jesus, while given freely, was not cheap. Instead, he wrote, “Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs us our very life, and it is grace because it gives us the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son... and above all, it is grace because God did not reckon his Son too dear a price to pay for our life.”

At first glance, it’s easy to think Bonhoeffer was reversing Luther’s insistence that grace was unconditional, unmerited, and free, instead arguing that we had to demonstrate our worthiness by being true disciples. But a closer reading reveals that Bonhoeffer,

like Luther, knew that while grace was always freely given by God, God hoped that we would not simply receive grace but be changed by it, enriched and enlivened in our daily lives and equipped to make a difference in the world God loves. The heart of Bonhoeffer’s distinction is that cheap grace makes no impact on the disciple’s life because it requires neither obedience nor sacrifice. In contrast, grace that is costly is not earned, but rather appreciated and harnessed to lead more vibrant and meaningful lives.

Consider this example from our everyday lives. Typically, parents avoid giving their children everything they want not because they don’t love them, but because they want them to appreciate what they have, to enjoy the satisfaction of personal accomplishment, and to know the value of hard work. Growing into a mature adult requires hard work, patience, and learning to surmount disappointments and setbacks. Whether a person learns these things or not, he or she will certainly continue to age, but whether they will actually grow into mature adults able both to shoulder and to enjoy adult responsibilities is an open question. In the same way, we all have received God’s love and grace, but whether we will actually follow Jesus and know both the hardships and rewards of obedient discipleship or merely take God’s grace for granted is an open question.

That is why we are looking at the “marks of discipleship” in our Sunday preaching series this Lent: to remind us of the costly but joyous life of those who follow Jesus by loving others. Make no mistake: the invitation to a cheap grace that calls us to insist upon our rights over the safety of others, or that promises material blessing and health to those who make the most strident confession, still abound. But so also does Jesus’ call to a costly and joyous life of discipleship focused not on ourselves but on our neighbor, and enriched not by getting everything we want but by realizing all that we already have.

Yours in Christ,



Pastor Lose

DAVID J. LOSE, SENIOR PASTOR

LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

After a very difficult winter surge in COVID-19 infections, hospitalizations, and deaths in November and December, late January and February have offered a much more hopeful picture, as those numbers are all dropping even as state- and nation-wide vaccination programs are expanded. At the same time, it's important to recognize that current rates are still higher than at any time during the spring and summer surges of last year.

Last fall, we developed and shared three community-health metrics that would guide our decisions about when it would be safest and most faithful to resume in-person Sunday worship:

- 1) A test positivity rate of less than 3% for at least two weeks.
- 2) A rate of infection spread of less than 1 for at least two weeks.
- 3) The successful rollout of a vaccination program that has at least inoculated the majority of health-care providers and the most vulnerable among us and is in initial stages of being distributed to the rest of the population.

These indicators suggest when we can hold worship in a way that not only mitigates the risk for our members and staff, but also reduces the chance that any infections that may occur as a result of our actions will spark or contribute to a new surge.

As the March *Messenger* goes to press, we have clearly satisfied one of those markers (rate of infection spread) and are closing in on the other two. At the same time, you have likely heard reports of several new and more contagious variant strains of the virus. Right now, it feels like we are in a race to see whether the vaccines or variations take hold, and March will be a critical indicator of which one wins the race.

Because of the significant improvement in these indicators, and based on our hope that conditions will continue to improve, we are planning to resume limited in-person Sunday worship on Palm Sunday, March 28. As with our current Wednesday open prayer times, those Sunday worship services will be socially distanced, limited in number, absent congregational and choral singing, and spaced out to allow time for all cleaning protocols. In addition, advanced registration and masks will be required. I will share more information about the times of services, number of spaces, and other factors in mid-March as we continue to see how the situation unfolds in the communities we serve. And, if conditions worsen, we will be prepared to delay our plans.

During this "interim" time, we will continue to record and make available all worship services online so that those who do not want to, or should not, attend worship can continue to be nurtured in their faith by the online worship offerings of the Church.

Yes, there is light at the end of the tunnel, and what we do here and now will absolutely determine how quickly we can move back to some semblance of normal. When this is behind us, I hope that we can rejoice in the sacrifices we have made in order to do our part to defeat this virus and obey our Lord's command to love one another just as he has loved us.

— PASTOR LOSE, SENIOR PASTOR

LIFE & GROWTH

JAN 16 - FEB 15

BAPTISMS

Genevieve A Gunderson
daughter of Greta and Mox

Anwen Leigh Kenning
daughter of Nicole and Ian

Avery Elise Kenning
daughter of Nicole and Ian

Kaja Jill Nelson
daughter of Annelise and Casey

Emma Noelle Pilarski
daughter of Sarah and Zach

Sally Jay Ruckel
daughter of Stephanie and William

DEATHS

Robert L. Allen
1936 – 2020

Evelyn A. Behlmer
1938 – 2020

Matthew W. Bloomquist
1986 – 2021

David S. Clark
1945 – 2021

Thomas A. Goetz
1937 – 2021

Mark L. Kays
1952 - 2021

William H. Michelsen
1924 - 2021

Mary Rischmiller-Holt
1928 - 2021

Marilyn M. Selby
1936 - 2021

H. Beverley Schei
1923 - 2021

Kathleen G. Tripp
1925 - 2021

DAILY READINGS

FROM PASTOR KALLAND

MARCH 2021

- 1 Jeremiah 29:11, Plans For You
- 2 Proverbs 3:1-2, Prolong Your Life
- 3 1 Timothy 6:10, Love Of Money
- 4 Ephesians 4:32, Kind, Compassionate, Forgiving
- 5 Psalm 90:2, Everlasting To Everlasting
- 6 John 16:7, Very Truly
- 7 1 Chronicles 29:11, Yours Is The Kingdom
- 8 Psalm 37:21, Wicked Or Righteous
- 9 2 Thessalonians 1:3, Increasing Love
- 10 Isaiah 49:15-16, The Palm Of God's Hands
- 11 Psalm 9:2, Sing Praises
- 12 James 5:16, Powerful And Effective
- 13 1 Corinthians 10:31, For The Glory Of God
- 14 Psalm 31:1, Deliver Me
- 15 1 John 4:11, Love One Another
- 16 Joshua 1:8, Meditate On It
- 17 Psalm 90:4, One Thousand Years
- 18 Ephesians 3:16-17, Rooted And Established In Love
- 19 Daniel 2:22, God Knows
- 20 Psalm 42:11, Soul Longs For God
- 21 2 Chronicles 30:9b, Gracious And Compassionate
- 22 Matthew 24:35, Never Pass Away
- 23 Proverbs 22:4, Humility
- 24 1 John 5:11, The Testimony
- 25 John 4:24, Spirit And Truth
- 26 Psalm 121:7-8, Now And Forevermore
- 27 2 Kings 20:5, Hears And Sees
- 28 1 Corinthians 13:2, Nothing Without Love
- 29 Proverbs 10:32, Righteous Or Wicked
- 30 Mark 1:15, Repent And Believe
- 31 Genesis 1:1-2, In The Beginning

DEVOTION

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
— 1 Corinthians 1:18

I still remember the first time I was in the starting line-up on my college basketball team. I was so excited to leave the locker room to get to the gym floor for warm-ups. And, wouldn't you know, as I jogged to the gym and began unsnapping those cool side-snap warm-up pants like the rest of my team, I tripped and fell flat on my face on the floor in front of a gym full of people. Did I ever feel foolish!

Who wants to be seen as a fool? Most of us are horrified at the thought!

This Lent, we're focusing on discipleship, or what it means to take up the cross as we follow Jesus. St. Paul reminds us that the cross is foolishness to a world that believes it's possible to never fall flat on one's face. None of us would ever choose to fall flat on our face in the midst of a crowd, and yet, when it happens, we realize that it is the power of the cross, not our own effort, that brings true life. Though the cross is folly to a world that is perishing, for those who believe, it is the very power of God.

Oh, how we wish we could avoid hardship, embarrassment and vulnerability! But it is actually in these places that Christ's power shines through most clearly. Taking up the cross does not mean we look for pain, search for problems or mess up because we think that life should be tough. No, taking up the cross means letting go and letting God lead, recognizing that the cross will surely come. To take up the cross is not to add another burden. Instead, to take up the cross frees us from the worries that so often hold us back, for Christ goes before us and never leaves us alone.

Dear God, give us the wisdom to see beyond what the world calls foolish to recognize that your way of the cross brings abundant and eternal life. Amen.
— PASTOR FREEMAN



HOLY WEEK WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

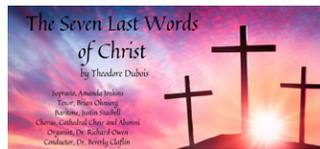
SUNDAY, MARCH 28 – PALM SUNDAY – THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

9am & 11am in-person worship at both campuses and available at mtolivet.org. A traditional Palm Sunday service that celebrates the entrance of Christ's triumphal arrival into Jerusalem. This special Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week and the final week of Lent. Join in raising our voices in praise, "Hosanna to the Son of David!"



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31 – THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF CHRIST

A musical recording of a past performance of this beloved work will be presented as a new video on the Mount Olivet website with postings of various artwork and new meditations from our Mount Olivet pastors. All of the additions will enrich the listening and visual experience for all. The presentation of this oratorio is a Holy Week tradition that has been part of Mount Olivet for over 70 years. This video will be available online at mtolivet.org, and emailed to our subscriber list. If you are not subscribed to our emails you can sign-up to receive these by visiting our website and going to the Connect @ Mount Olivet page.



THURSDAY, APRIL 1 – MAUNDY THURSDAY

Mpls Campus: 7am, 12noon, 4pm, & 7pm
West Campus: 12noon & 7pm

An online service will also be available on the website. These Maundy Thursday Holy Communion services commemorate the day on which Jesus Christ shared the Last Supper with his apostles, prior to his crucifixion. The term Maundy is derived from the Latin word for "command," and refers to Jesus' commandment to the disciples to, "Love one another as I have loved you." Registration is required and seating is limited. Masks required. Visit mtolivet.org to register for available times or contact the church office at 612.926.7651.



FRIDAY, APRIL 2 – GOOD FRIDAY TENEBRAE SERVICE

A somber and reflective Tenebrae service will be offered online with the reading of the passion story scriptures by our pastors as the candles on the Tenebrae table are extinguished. This special service, observed during the final part of Holy Week, marks the observance of the sufferings and death of Christ. A recording of this service will be emailed to our subscriber list and available at mtolivet.org for viewing. If you would like to receive emails from Mount Olivet, please join our subscriber list by visiting our website and going to the Connect @ Mount Olivet page.



SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

GREET & GIVE DONATION DRIVES - MONTHLY

4-6pm, 1st Monday, Mpls Campus, & 3rd Monday, West Campus. Updated list of items in greatest need available at mtolivet.org

COMMUNITY MEALS - WEEKLY

Tuesdays & Thursdays beginning at 4pm, Mpls Campus. Monetary donations for this ministry are taken online or in-person at meals.

EASTER MEAL DELIVERY

Saturday, March 20, 11am-1pm, Mpls Campus. If you would like a meal delivered or are able to volunteer as a delivery driver of meals, please contact Ann LaBree at annl@mtolivet.org or 612.767.2288.

EASTER ANGEL GIFTS DONATIONS

Please donate non-perishable, food items, small new toys, and individually wrapped Easter candy. Drop off and label Angel Gift Donation at our Greet & Give Donation Drives (*information above*). Easter Angel Gift Baskets support families identified by our community partners at both campuses. We are looking for volunteers to deliver assembled Easter Angel Baskets to families on Saturday, March 27. To volunteer as a delivery driver, please contact Geoff Arenson at 612.767.2212 or geoffa@mtolivet.org

FOOD DRIVE

Please donate non-perishable food items for our community partners on March 7, 2021, 10am-12noon, Mpls & West Campuses. This is a drive-thru event.

EASTER MEAL DELIVERY

Saturday, March 20, 11am-1pm, Minneapolis Campus. Share the joy of Easter and spring by bringing a meal to a member (or two) who would greatly appreciate your smile and the goodness of a meal from our Mount Olivet kitchen. Volunteer drivers needed to deliver a meal to our members. Time commitment approximately one hour. Please contact Ann LaBree at annl@mtolivet.org or 612.767.2288 to get set up!

PASTORAL CARE RESOURCES

If you or a loved one are hospitalized, please contact Andrea 612.767.2209, Julie 612.767.2208, or Ann 612.767.2288.

If you need to reach a Pastor for emergencies including imminent deaths, hospitalizations, or support after office hours please call the on-call phone at 612.916.9016.

Mount Olivet's Prayer Ministry team provides prayer support to those in need of prayer. In order to submit a prayer request, please call 612.767.2300

MARRIAGE PREPARATION WORKSHOP

Saturday, April 17, via Zoom, 9:30am-2pm, \$125, lunch included! Facilitated by Shannon Himango, MA, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, and Director of the Mount Olivet Counseling Service. This fun and engaging 4 hour workshop, along with the completing the Prepare Questionnaire and talking through the results with a Pastor or Prepare facilitator, is designed to enrich your relationship as a married couple; focusing on important topics. To register, please visit mtolivet.org or contact Molly at 612.927.7335 or mpach@mtolivetcounseling.org.

Have You Taken Control of Your Health Today?

Monday, April 19, 9am-4pm, Minneapolis Campus

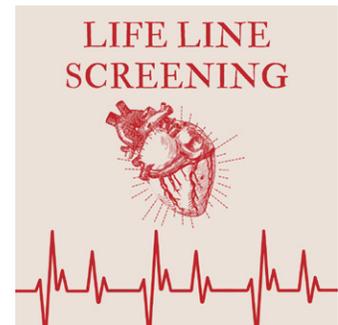
Life Line Screening will be here at Mount Olivet Lutheran Church on Monday, April 19, 2021 offering safe, painless, non-invasive preventive health screenings that are typically not a part of a routine physical. To be more proactive about your health and to live longer for yourself, your family and your community, please register for these potentially life-saving tests today.

There is no time like the present to take action! Learn more by watching this short video: <http://www.lifelinescreeningblog.com/introduction/>

Three ways to register:

- Call toll-free: 866-229-0469
- Online: www.lifelinescreening.com/communitycircle
- Text: the word circle to 797979

If you have questions, please contact Andrea Brown at andreab@mtolivet.org or by phone at 612.767.2209.



The Impact of Isolation on Mental Health

As humans we are designed for connection. That can include physical and emotional connection with our environment and with those around us. Neuroscience suggests that we are neurologically wired to connect with others; mirror neurons in our brains are stimulated when we're interacting with other people. When you are talking to someone, pathways in your brain light up to mirror the emotions and behaviors that this other person is conveying. When we experience extended periods of isolation it can decrease our endorphins, resulting in sluggishness, sleep disruption and increased sadness. Unfortunately, when sadness creeps in, we tend to feel the urge to isolate more. How can you combat isolation? Engage in your environment, engage with others, and avoid, avoiding. Even if you can't be physically present with others, connecting via phone or video call can decrease disconnection. Taking a drive, getting outside of your room or walking outdoors can also be creative ways to reduce isolation. If you've found yourself stuck in isolation, consider taking steps toward engaging in your environment today.

JESSICA SMITH, MA, LMFT, Mount Olivet Counseling Service

EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE BIBLE* BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK...

MARCH QUESTION: HOW DO I ENJOY READING THE BIBLE? (PART 2)

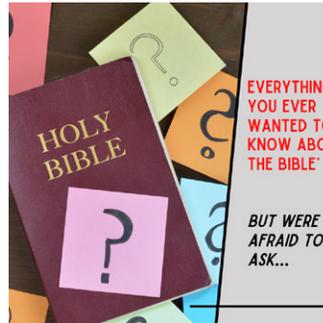
Last month's video *How Do I Enjoy Reading the Bible? (Part 1)* focused on what is "behind" and "in" scripture passages. In other words, what are the historical and contextual circumstances and realities "behind" biblical writings which give added insight to its composition, and how do we look at passages "in" the context of the verses being a part of a greater piece of literature (i.e. a letter, a historical piece, a parable, or story).

This month, Part 2, focuses on what is "around" and "in front of" scripture passages. To say it another way, how does what's happening "around" a piece of scripture, such as the particular church worship (a funeral, wedding, season, song) or how certain grounding theological assertions affect our encounter with the text? Also, we'll examine what is "in front of us" in terms of the current events we are facing either in our individual or collective hearts and minds, and how those realities affect our reading and enjoyment.

Join in to add joy to your encounter of the deep, rich, living written word of God.

— PASTOR RUUD

It's not too late to join this year-long monthly series! Register at mtolivet.org/education.

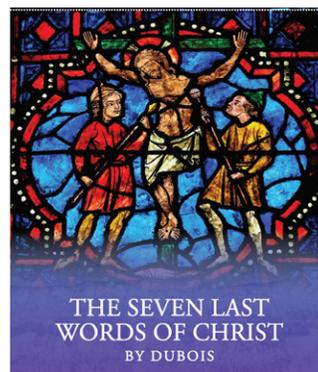


THE STORY BEHIND THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF CHRIST

Join Pastor Lose and Dr. Beverly Clafin as they share insight into *The Seven Last Words of Christ* by Theodore Dubois--the beloved Holy Week tradition that the Cathedral Choir and alumni have been singing for decades.

Pastor Lose will share biblical context and historical information for the seven words—actually phrases—spoken by Christ. Dr. Clafin will talk about what's happening musically in each word. If you are a Cathedral Choir alumni, think of these videos as an expanded rehearsal giving Dr. Clafin time (and a calmer setting than 300+ people crammed in the Rehearsal Hall!) to explain who is singing what, when, and why—plus more!

The videos will be released beginning March 10.



WHAT DOES "LUTHERAN" MEAN?

You might find this class interesting, helpful, and fun if you... are new to the tradition, are a life-long-learned Lutheran, took the class before, can't remember your 8th grade Confirmation classes, or only know "Luther" as the villain in Superman comics. Together we'll examine core theological foundations of understanding God in Christ and how it functions for our daily life of faith, led by Pastor Ruud.

SESSION 1 | FAITH

ALONE: There's nothing for you to do... No, but seriously... there's nothing for you to do... seriously.

SESSION 2 | SAINTS AND SINNERS:

Living the double life. Resurrected daily.

SESSION 3 | THEOLOGY OF THE CROSS:

The power of God found in puny, weak, common, hidden things, and why we often seek something more.

SESSION 4 | VOCATION:

What to do, and what God does with you, now that there's nothing to do, sometimes whether you like it or not.

Videos will be emailed to registered participants on April 13, 20, 27, and May 4. If you haven't register, please visit mtolivet.org/education today!

LIVING WELL, LEADING WELL

A monthly series of virtual workshops promoting wholeness, wellbeing, and renewal in our personal and professional lives.



PURSUING JUSTICE

3/11, 6:30-8:30pm, \$20. Two of the 20th century's most well know theologian-pastor-activists, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Martin Luther King, Jr., placed an important emphasis on the relationship between living in community and doing justice. Together we will explore their understanding of building and sustaining authentic community as a crucial framework for doing justice work. Join Reverend Chris Dorsey, president of Higher Education Leadership Ministries and former seminary professor and university chaplain, to learn about our call to pursue racial justice and equity as followers of Jesus Christ. Register at mtolivet.org.

SAVE THE DATE FOR THE APRIL WORKSHOP

4/22, 6:30-8:30pm with Rev. Kara K. Root and Rev. Lisa Larges, pastors at Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church, a church known for its creative practices of Sabbath and hospitality.



Choosing Joy

We are fast approaching the one-year mark of the pandemic in the United States. The losses keep piling up. While glimpses of hope abound, so do causes for concern. How do we find joy in these times when we feel weary, lonely, worried, and grieved?

On January 30, we explored these questions as part of our first online mini-retreat in our series, "Living Well. Leading Well." One-hundred people registered for "Choosing Joy!" We learned. We laughed. We experienced joy.

Joy is similar to happiness and delight, yet deeper. We may feel joy when one of our cherished goals is fulfilled or when something good emerges from a horrible situation. We experience joy when we are satisfied with our own lives and when we contribute to the flourishing of other people and the natural world. Joy is contagious, meant to be shared rather than hoarded. Taking joy in others' delight increases our personal and communal wellbeing. Joy also is durable. It persists in the midst of pain and perplexity.

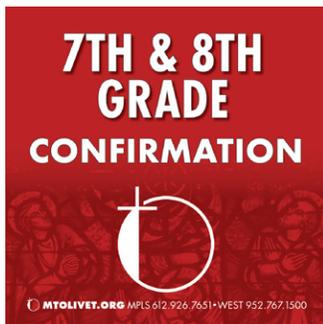
While joy ultimately is a gift from God, we can choose joy insofar as it is an action and related to how we interpret our life and our circumstances. We do so by reflecting upon and resting in the promises of God. We do so by practicing gratitude. When we feel joy, we tend to be thankful. It's also true that when we practice gratitude regularly, our joy increases. Finally, we can learn joy by drawing near to those who exemplify it. We hope that joy surprises you these days, and that you join us for future mini-retreats!

REV. DR. THERESA LATINI, *Executive Director of Mount Olivet Conference & Retreat Center*

PHOTOS CAPTION A few of the women who attended "Choosing Joy."

UPCOMING EVENTS YOUTH MINISTRY

To register for these events, please contact Anna Herd aherd@mtolivet.org, 612.767.2279 or Annie Moynihan amoynihhan@mtolivet.org, 612.767.2211.



CONFIRMATION

3/3: 7th grade Zoom
3/10: 8th grade Zoom
NO CONFIRMATION:
 3/17, 3/21, and 3/28



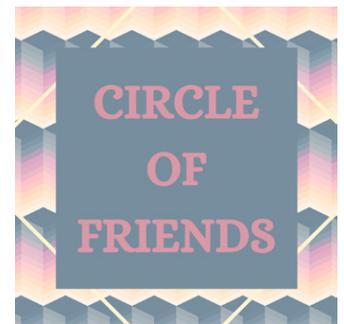
HI-LEAGUE

3/2: After-School In-person
 Mpls Small Group, 5-5:45pm
3/ 9: After-School ZOOM
 Small Group, 5-5:45pm
3/16: After-School In-person
 West Small Group, 5-5:45pm



JHA

3/13: STAYCATION BINGO
11am-12noon, via Zoom.
 Bumped about not traveling for spring break? Join Captain Anna and her Cruise ship crew for a fun event!



COF

3/8: TRIVIA NIGHT
6-7pm, via Zoom. Get ready to test your general (and not so general) knowledge by answering team trivia questions!



MO UNITED

3/16: GAME NIGHT
6-7pm, via Zoom. Join us for charades and Pictionary! It is sure to be a lively and goofy game night.



AGP

3/1: THE GREAT AGP BAKING SHOW
4:45-5:45pm. We will meet over Zoom and bake a tasty treat! Please contact Anna Herd aherd@mtolivet.org with questions.



ANGEL GIFTS

3/27 MPLS & WEST
 Volunteer Event For 7th through 12th Grade. Please see *page 15* for more details.



SAVE THE DATE

BACCALAUREATE
 For 12th Grade Students and their Parent(s)
5/16: West 8-9am
5/23: Minneapolis 8-9am



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A DISCIPLE?

PERSPECTIVE FROM HI-LEAGUE AND JHA

God knows we make mistakes. We aren't perfect as human beings, and that is exactly the way he made us. We make bad decisions, we treat people poorly, and we blame God when life gets hard. Being a disciple isn't about being a perfect person, or trying to "earn" God's love. It's doing our best to treat others with kindness and choosing to believe in a God that loves us and has a plan for us.



From a young age, we are told to be kind and treat everyone equally. For me, it was being told to "be kind to one another" by Kristi Youngdahl after every meal at camp. These are simple words, yet they give us the very answer we are looking for when we ask what it means to be a disciple. In the Bible, disciples are followers of Jesus. They live their lives to serve him because his message is one they believe in with all they are. My interpretation of the word is a little different. I believe that by leading a life that embodies the values of Jesus, we encourage others to do the same. By choosing not to gossip about our friends, we make others realize that they can make the same decision. By standing up for a victim of bullying, we show the oppressor that hurting others doesn't give them status. Not everyone has the courage to light the path that Jesus hopes we will take. Luckily, it only takes one person to inspire the rest. It is our job as disciples to be that one.

— LIZZIE NORMAN, 11th Grader at the Mpls Campus

The word disciple comes from the Latin root *discipulus*, meaning 'learner.' From my perspective, a disciple is a learner, a follower, and a worshiper of Jesus. Jesus is the only son of our Lord God. That gives him power and grace that we as humans could never achieve. He is important, caring, and wise, all things that we wish to be. When we see an influential person in our lives such as a celebrity, we want to be just like them. We want to act how they act and do what they do. In this case, Jesus is our celebrity. Jesus is kind, loving, and forgiving. We are disciples because we try to be just as kind and caring as Jesus. We learn about his selfless actions. We study his triumphs. We try to replicate his kindness by amicably treating others. We forgive those who have treated us wrong because that is what he would do. We are motivated every day to live in a way that he would. We pray to him to show our appreciation. We honor him and how he died for us. We go to church to learn about him and immerse ourselves more in faith. We love him and he loves us, therefore we are his disciples.



— LEAH NELSON, 7th grader at the West Campus

ANGEL GIFTS

I wanted to share a few words on Angel Gifts and why I think it is a special part of Mount Olivet's history of service. First, and most important of all, this event focuses on relationships and our connection to other volunteers and the community it helps to serve. Each year I am amazed at the many people that make this such a special day for all that are involved! This year we are partnering with Love INC and Pastor Scott and his Outreach Ministry. Both of these ministries focus on relationships and loving our neighbor unconditionally just as Jesus taught us to do. On Saturday, March 27, we are asking for Mount Olivet families to help delivery these special gift baskets that will go to people in need in our community. If your family is interested in volunteering, please contact geoffa@mtolivet.org for more information on how to become involved. — GEOFF ARENSEN, Director of Youth Ministry

UPCOMING EVENTS CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY



IN MARCH

OPEN ART STUDIO

New dates/times are available online! We hope you enjoy the variety of activities available, and thank you for keeping the space tidy for the next family to use the space.



IN MARCH

OPEN GYM

New dates/times are available for Open Gym – register online. Due to the popularity of gym time, please be sure to contact Katy Michaletz with any cancellations so we can offer the time to others!



MARCH 7

FAMILY DAY AWAY

10am-3pm. Register at mtolivet.org for a fun day at the Retreat Center with outdoor activities, swimming, crafts, and food options available.



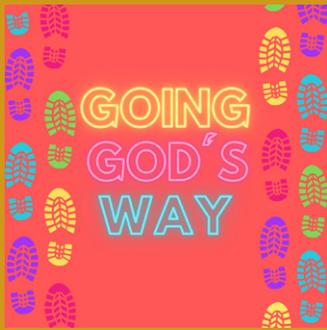
MARCH 28

FAMILY DAY AWAY

10am-3pm. Register at mtolivet.org for a fun day at the Retreat Center with outdoor activities, swimming, crafts, and food options available.

NEW MOUNT OLIVET PRESCHOOL

We are excited to announce that the Mount Olivet Preschool will re-open this fall with new and expanded programs for families of 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds. Over the past year, we have made a variety of upgrades to classrooms, the outdoor play space, and refreshed equipment throughout our spaces. Our new Preschool will offer full-day, 5-day/week, year-round programming with options for extended care for families who depend upon their preschool to offer a caring and enriching environment for their children. Families can look forward to a high-quality, play-based, arts-enhanced and faith-filled preschool education that has been the hallmark of the Mount Olivet Preschool for more than 50 years. Plans related to curriculum and registration continue to develop. If you would like to receive updates about the Mount Olivet Preschool– including detailed program information, tuition rates, scheduling, and registration – please contact Katy Michaletz, Director of Children & Family Ministry via email at kmichaletz@mtolivet.org. We hope your child will join us!



THIS MONTH ON GOING GOD'S WAY

*"Create in me a clean heart,
O God; and renew a right
Spirit within me." –Psalm
51:10*

During Lent, this scripture will become *Going God's Way* Lenten prayer and will be used to remind us of our weekly journey as we walk to the cross with Jesus. Just like the Advent Sundays were marked with candles on a wreath, our Lenten Sundays will be marked by a word of the week puzzle with word pieces that encourage us to learn more about our faith and to put our faith into action. *Going God's Way* continues to teach the same Bible stories that are used for Sunday morning worship and our pastors show us how those stories are biblical examples of our Lenten word of the week. As we grow in our discipleship, may the cross of Jesus always go before us, and the Spirit of God constantly renew us. Tune in to walk to the cross with us during Lent! Visit mtolivet.org/going-gods-way to watch!

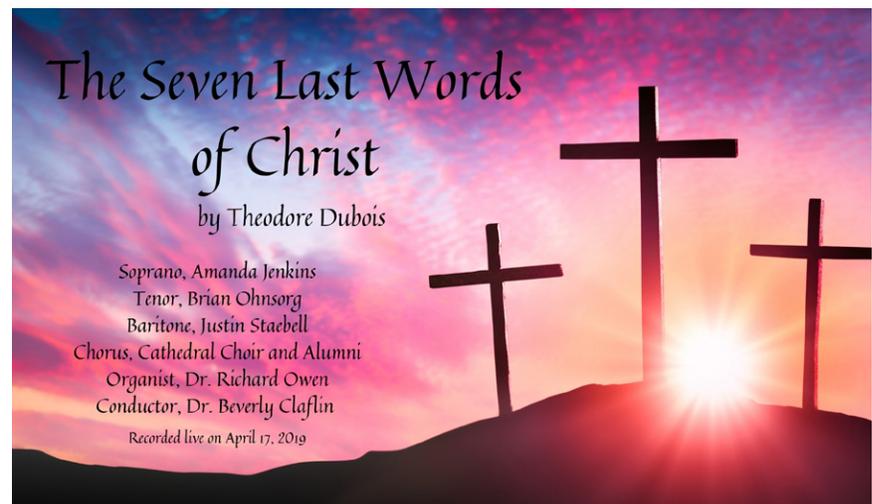
Seven Last Words Re-explored

The presentation of the oratorio, *The Seven Last Words of Christ* is a meaningful and special tradition of our congregation. For many years the service has been held on the Wednesday of Holy Week and represents an important part of our Lenten journey. As far back as can be traced, we believe this tradition began in 1949.

With the continuation of the pandemic keeping us from performing this year, we thought this would be a perfect time to offer additional opportunities to learn about the work and to try something different for the listener.

If you turn back to page 8, the Adult Ministry page, you will find information about the upcoming class, *The Story Behind Seven Last Words of Christ* taught by Pastor Lose and Dr. Clafin. Whether you have sung the work, or it is all new to you, the class will hopefully offer some additional insights into the text and the music which, will make listening even more enjoyable.

DR. BEVERLY CLAFLIN, *Director of Music & Worship*



THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF CHRIST

The musical recording of a past concert will be presented as a new video on Mount Olivet's website with postings of artwork of various artists and new meditations from our Mount Olivet pastors, which we believe will enrich the listening experience for all. If you are currently subscribed to Mount

Olivet emails, you will receive a link to this video on the Wednesday, March 31. If you are not subscribed to our emails you can sign-up to receive these emails at mtolivet.org.



WHAT A GIFT!

Our family joined Mount Olivet on November 2, 1975, at the 11am service ...approximately! Like birthdays and anniversaries, this is a date we celebrate for all it has brought into our lives. At the time, we were parents of an infant and a three-year old, and we knew we needed a partner to pass on faith to the next generation.

Seven months later, I was invited to teach confirmation to seventh graders. I knew I was out of my depth! If I wanted to share faith with these wondrous question-askers, I would need to be equipped! So, I turned to Bible study... and I have never turned back.

We became Bible study junkies, signing up, year after year, to be taught by astute pastors and teachers. Why? We grew deeper in our faith. We built incredible circles of connection at Mount Olivet. And we developed more knowledge, skills... and questions! This was the place we could bring our questions, explore with others, trust the answers, and grow together to be the church. We were able to take it home and share faith with our expanding family.

And I was off and running with confirmation, the very age I had dreaded my children to be. I fell in love with these amazing kids. They asked the very best questions and invited me to grow in faith with them. At Mount Olivet, youth finish confirmation in two years. It took me 23 incredible years of teaching, even running the program for 13 years.

Now, I facilitate three Living the Message groups that have been meeting for 11 years each. We are blessed to learn from this series and all Adult Education opportunities—like the Gospel of Matthew video study this year, which prepares us to go deeper in worship and anchors our worship in that Gospel. We love to learn from speakers, retreats, and devotions that deepen our faith and knowledge.

Stewardship invites us to say “thank you” to our church for all it provides in growing faith and community and purpose for us. It is a privilege to give back to our church, the place that joins us daily in this journey of faith. Won’t you join us in studying God’s Word and in giving back, so that all might know the life-transforming faith in Jesus?

— **MARILYN SHARPE, member since 1975 and supporter of all things education (and more!) at Mount Olivet**



PHOTOS TOP TO BOTTOM

Mpls Campus & Les and Marilyn Sharpe

PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A GIFT TO MOUNT OLIVET

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

WAYS TO GIVE

Give Online: *with your credit card or bank information by visiting mtolivet.org/online-giving. Scroll until you see the “Give Online Now” button.*

Realm Connect App: *login using your Realm username and password and click “Giving.”*

Text to Give: *text “MTOLIVET” to 73256 and follow the instructions provided.*

Contact Us: *we are here to help! Contact Tricia Lerohl-Morgan in our finance office at 612.767.2255 or by email at tricial@mtolivet.org.*

Donor-Advised Funds & Charitable IRA Rollover: *Contact Mari Carlson, Director of Development, at 612.821.3150 or by email at mcarlson@mtolivethomes.org.*

Stocks: *Contact Deanne Nelson in the finance office at 612.767.2280 or by email at deannen@mtolivet.org.*

UPCOMING SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES



GREET & GIVE DONATION DRIVES - MONTHLY

4-6pm, 1st Monday, Mpls Campus, (March 1) & 3rd Monday, West Campus (March 15). Updated list of items in greatest need available at mtolivet.org



EASTER ANGEL DONATIONS

We are now accepting donations for our annual Easter Angel Baskets! These baskets contain food items, smaller Easter treats, toys, and stuffed animals. On March 27, the baskets will be assembled at both campuses and delivered by youth volunteers and their families to our community partner Love INC (West) and the surrounding community (Mpls). Donations accepted during our Greet and Give Drives in March. Donation boxes are also available at doors 2 and 3 at the Mpls Campus. Visit mtolivet.org for a list of suggested items.



COMMUNITY MEALS - WEEKLY

Tuesdays & Thursdays beginning at 4pm, Mpls Campus. Monetary donations for this ministry are taken online or in-person at meals.



FOOD DRIVE

Please donate non-perishable food items for our community partners on March 7, 2021, 10am-12noon, Mpls & West Campuses. This is a drive-thru event.



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