



The Olive Branch

April 9, 2025

Accent on Worship

Jim Bargmann

Sunday Readings

April 13, 2025

Sunday of the Passion, year C

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 31:9-16

Philippians 2:5-11

Luke 22:14 – 23:56

April 20, 2025

*Resurrection of Our Lord,
year C*

Isaiah 65:717-25

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

1 Corinthians 15:19-26

Luke 24:1-12

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

On Sunday, we have the opportunity to again hear the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and the Passion account in our liturgy. Although I have taught and written about these passages many times in my professional life, some of the events of the week before Jesus' crucifixion have taken on a new sense of contemporary-ness given recent events in our own society.

I will offer this caveat, however. While many of these ideas come straight from the Biblical text, some of these thoughts are formed from reading the work of historians and Biblical scholars well versed in the culture of Palestine and the Roman Empire in the First Century and informed by the Biblical text, but not explicitly articulated by Jesus or the Biblical authors.

First, the triumphal entry itself. This is a curious act all on its own. There is a very strong correlation between the events of this day and previous historical coronations in the history of the Jewish people, most notably Solomon. In 1 Kings 1:32-37, David gives specific instructions on how Solomon is to be brought to his own anointing as the next ruler of Israel. These instructions very closely match the events of Jesus' own entry into Jerusalem. There are also the words of the prophets that foretold such events, notably recorded for us in Zechariah 9:9 and Isaiah 62:11. And the words shouted (and possibly sung) by the crowds echo from the Psalms, especially Psalm 118. And these acts were not simply something done to Jesus, but an event he actively participated in. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all recount Jesus giving specific instructions on how the disciples should secure the donkey on which he would ride and in Matthew, Jesus quotes Zechariah 9:9.

So was Jesus an active participant in attempting to establish God's reign on earth with all that might mean for enforcing a

continued on page 2

Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

certain world view on a broad section of first century society? That would certainly have implications for where we find ourselves in the 21st century. More on that later.

Continuing in the passion account, we see Jesus before Pilate and then presented to the crowd as a possible candidate for release from the penalty of death, a tradition of the Roman Empire established in an attempt to appease the occupied population of Israel. The other candidate for release was a man named Barabbas (whose name ironically means Son of the Father or Son of God). Barabbas is identified by the Gospel writers in various ways: rioter, murderer, insurrectionist. Some historians who have studied cultural movements in first century Palestine have hypothesized that perhaps Barabbas was actually a part of a group not only wanting to violently overthrow the Roman occupying government, but to install a religiously oriented Jewish theocracy and perhaps even saw Jesus as the one who would lead that government. Some others have even put forward the possibility that Judas was a part of the same movement and those beliefs motivated his actions of betrayal - either because he was hoping Jesus' arrest would provoke him to stronger action or because he had become disillusioned with Jesus' seeming inaction. Again, all inferences drawn from a combination of the Biblical text and historical record - but we have no way to know the individual motivations and beliefs of individual people. But I think an interesting thought exercise, regardless.

Interesting given the rise of so-called Christian Nationalism in our own country and the world.

But I think it is clear that Jesus was not interested in a reign that involved political power. Especially if the thoughts about Barabbas, Judas, and various other insurrectionist and Zionist movements operating at that time in history were true, Jesus would have had ample opportunity to take this kind of power had that been God's goal in sending Jesus in the first place. But instead, we have a record of Jesus very clearly communicating a different kind of reign. Jesus explicitly rejects this kind of powerful, authoritarian reign among the disciples and it stands to reason he would reject this kind of power for himself. "You know that the rulers of the gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you, but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave, just as the Son-of-Humanity came not to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:25b-28). Matthew and Luke both record a different conversation that describes the reign of God from Jesus perspective:

"When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them.'"

So this Passion Sunday, we can celebrate and marvel at the fact that the reign of God realized in Jesus and continuing through us is not one of earthly power and domination, but one of love, care, and justice for all of God's children. A different kind of reign.

- Jim Bargmann

The Olive Branch

Calendar

Wednesday, April 9

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

Thursday, April 10

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

Friday, April 11

- 7:00 pm Recovery Group

Saturday, April 12

- 9:00 am Altar Guild Chancel cleaning
10:00 am Book Discussion group

Sunday, April 13 - Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday

- 8:00 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee and conversation
9:30 am Godly Play will meet this day
10:45 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee and conversation

Monday, April 14 - Monday in Holy Week

- Noon *Daily Prayer*
5:30 pm Family Music Time (online only)
7:00 pm Monday Night WAVE (N.A.)

Tuesday, April 15 - Tuesday in Holy Week

- Noon Daily Prayer, followed by Bible Study

Easter Garden

If you would like to make a donation to help defray the costs of the beautiful flowers which adorn our Easter liturgies, please make your gift payable to Mount Olive, but be sure that "Easter Flowers" is clearly designated on the envelope and your check.

These gifts can be brought or mailed to the church office or placed in the offering plate on Sunday mornings between now and Easter Day, April 20.

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](#).

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 difference in Sunday schedule!)

Special Congregation Meeting to Call a Cantor

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

The Call Committee has recommended a name to the Vestry, who have approved the name and a Letter of Call to be presented to the congregation at this meeting.

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

Godly Play Themes for This Week

Godly Play WILL meet this coming Sunday. We have an important time in Godly Play, for on this Sunday both Godly Play circles will hear Holy Week stories just as our Palm Sunday worship moves us into Holy Week.



Children are invited to draw into Holy Week together in Godly Play. All children ages 3-Grade 1 are welcome to Circle One, and children in grades 2-5 are welcome to Circle Two.

Books Needed!

Hello, people of Mount Olive! My name is Elena Molbert. You may know my parents Tricia and Chandler Molbert.

My friends and I are doing a community service project for a school assignment at Justice Page Middle School in Minneapolis, and we need books. We're trying to get a ton of books to fill Little Free Libraries around town, so people who don't have good access to books or libraries can have the joy of reading. Any and all books will be welcome and appreciated.

Beginning last Sunday, March 30, there is a box with a sign on it for those who want to donate books during coffee hour. The box (hopefully filled with books) will be available for your donations until Easter Sunday, April 20.

Thanks for your help with this important effort!

- Elena Molbert

Upcoming Adult Forums

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

April 27 & May 4 - One of our most popular guest speakers will again present at the adult forum for these 2 weeks. In the first session, Professor Earl Schwartz will speak on the prophet Amos, leading to a conversation about the narrative in chapter 7. Then, in the second session, he will link that confrontation between priest and prophet with Jesus' actions on the Temple Mount prior to his arrest. He has used this for some time in lectures as a professor at Hamline University, and he is looking forward to presenting this connection to the Mount Olive community.

Please plan on joining us at 9:30 on both Sundays

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.

Fish Fry Fellowship

This is the Mount Olive group at St. Matthews Catholic Church in St Paul.

The final fish fry for this year will be this Friday, April 12 at Church of the Annunciation, 509 W. 54th St., Minneapolis, \$12, 5:00-7:00 p.m. <https://www.annunciationmsp.org/church/free-food-distribution>. Includes a pre-paid option.



Chancel Dusting and Polishing Day

The Altar Guild is hosting a chancel-cleaning event this **Saturday, April 12, beginning at 9:00 a.m.** (Please note the schedule change due to a funeral on April 5 – one week later).

Please join our crew – for an hour, for the morning. The more hands, the faster we'll finish! Come help prepare our worship space for Holy Week and Easter.

Questions? Contact Beth Gaede – bgaede13@gmail.com.

Lingering on the Liturgy: A New Thing?

The holy days are almost upon us. True, all days are holy, sanctified by God for work and for rest. But next week marks our annual *pascha* – our Christian Passover celebrating Christ's paschal mystery in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. As a community, we look forward to these days and these liturgies with great anticipation each year.

This year, you may notice some additions and minor alterations sprinkled throughout our Holy Week and Triduum liturgies. None of these will be new and each is found in the rubrics we've inherited from the Christian Tradition. In bringing such additions forward this year, the Worship Committee seeks to, as Tom Schattauer more eloquently stated in Adult Forum on Sunday, take our inherited forms of worship and reimagine them within our current context.

Different things are neither necessarily good nor bad. They just are. As we experience Holy Week and the Triduum together again, allow yourself to withhold judgement on liturgical differences you notice. Instead, hold space for what is, what you and we experience from moment to moment. Is God doing a new thing? Is Christ drawing you, drawing us, step by step, to the letting go of the things that hold us back, and toward the paschal life of the Triune God?

– Andrew Stoebig, with indebtedness to Tom Schattauer and Pastor Crippen

Reminders

Please do not leave your car parked in the handicapped drop-off area in front of the Parish House! Use this space only for dropping off and picking people up, and then promptly move your car, as others have to use that space as well. Parking is also available on weekends behind the Career Force Center at the corner of Lake St. & Chicago Avenue.

Please do not leave valuables in your coat pockets while you are at church, especially if you hang your coat in the coat room or on the coat rack downstairs outside the choir room.

Sunday Eucharist: 8 & 10:45 am

Contact Us

Phone: 612/827-5919

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.*

In This Issue:

- **Accent on Worship – Jim Bargmann**
- **Holy Week Worship Schedule**
- **Special Congregation Meeting This Sunday, Noon**
- **Books Needed!**
- **Adult Forum Schedule**
- **Easter Garden Donations Sought**
- **Neighborhood Ministries Partner of the Month:**
Lake Street Council