

Volume LV
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Messenger

MOUNT OLIVE LUTHERAN CHURCH

7301 North 28 Avenue Omaha, Nebraska, 68112 402-455-8700 www.mountoliveomaha.com



Sunday of the Passion (Palm Sunday)

Sunday, April 9, 9:00 A.M.

Holy (Maundy) Thursday Eucharist

Thursday, April 13, 7:00 P.M.

Good Friday Worship

Friday, April 14, 7:00 P.M.

Great Vigil of Easter

Saturday, April 15, 8:00 P.M.

Easter Sunday—April 16

Easter Breakfast, 7:45 A.M.

Festival Holy Communion, 9:00 A.M.



Passion Sunday is the name of the Sunday which used to be called Palm Sunday. This year it is April 9. The logic behind this replacement is very interesting. The change was made originally by the Roman Catholic editors of the first three-year lectionary that came out of Vatican II in the latter part of the 1960's. (A lectionary is the appointed Bible readings for Sunday mornings.) These theologians had noticed that a very small percentage of church members attend Good Friday services. Thus a typical parishioner would hear of Jesus riding into Jerusalem with great fanfare on Palm Sunday as King, and next they heard of him rising from the dead on Easter. They never heard the narrative of the cross. They never heard him mocked, condemned, beaten, and crucified as a blaspheming traitor. So their expectations of the Christian life were of glorious times, peaceful scenes, and victory hailed by happy crowds.

How many of us have unwittingly developed just such an expectation for our Christian lives? A life of glory and ease and success—Palm Sunday and Easter without our crosses in between—is not the real Christian life, the life Jesus promised. How many of us really rejoice to be counted worthy to suffer shame for the sake of His name, as the apostles did?

This year we will hear the Passion of our Lord according to Matthew on Passion/Palm Sunday. Every Good Friday, as this year, we hear a public reading of the Passion of our Lord according to John. We Lutherans hold midweek

Lenten services that often walk us through Jesus' path through the cross. For example, this year we have heard various characters from the story of Jesus' suffering and death talk to us. If we pay attention to these Scripture readings, we will not fall prey to a theology of glory that proclaims worldly victory and success for God's people at every turn.

You have often heard me say: You better look good on wood. What does that mean? It means that Jesus ended up on a wooden cross of suffering and punishment that worked out our eternal salvation. Now Jesus invites us to follow Him. If the world treated Jesus with disdain and abuse and misunderstanding and hatred, why would we expect anything different for ourselves? Following Jesus is no promise of a charmed earthly life. Following Jesus is the promise of a crown that follows a servant-like life. We know how it all ends up in the end. We know the final chapter of our life. Jesus' resurrection victory has already written that glorious heavenly chapter for us. Yes, our earthly life is not all there is. The gate of death opens to a Promised Land that is out of this world.

In the meantime, the cross of Jesus is the central event of our faith! And because of that cross, we do not walk alone through the many tribulations of this world. We have a Savior who walks before us leading us toward an eternal destination around God's throne and with His redeemed people.

—Rev. Roland A. Jank, Jr.



Don't miss breakfast on Easter morning, April 16, beginning at 7:45 a.m. The Youth Group is hosting this fundraiser for youth activities here at Mt. Olive. The suggested cost is \$4 for adults, \$2 for children under 12, and \$15 for families.

Easter breakfast dates/times:

- Saturday, April 15, 9am, Youth Group to set-up for Easter Breakfast
- Sunday, April 16, 7am, Youth Group to arrive for planning and to prepare food
- **Sunday, April 16, 7:45am, breakfast is served**

With Easter approaching, so is our annual Easter Egg Hunt. This year it is on April 9th, Palm Sunday, at 2:00 p.m. at Craig Park (28th & Craig Ave.). We have a great opportunity to share Christ's amazing mercy and grace from the cross, grave, and resurrection.

Nothing like an open opportunity to speak in a city park to families from our community about our Lord. Of course, everyone enjoys watching the children race to get the plastic jelly bean-filled eggs, having our own enthusiastic group of actors telling the Easter Story, seeing kids bouncing in a bounce house, and the no pressure conversation everyone is allowed to have with our neighbors. Our mission is to share, care, and serve our community and this opportunity is the easiest way to do all three. Come, join our neighbors on April 9th at 2:00 p.m. at Craig Park. There might be a jelly bean or two for you!!

Laura Hogan, Evangelism Outreach Coordinator



The Symbols of Easter

The Tomb

The symbol of Christ's resurrection is the tomb. Usually in paintings it is shown with the stone at one side rolled away from the opening and an angel guarding the entrance. It portrays for us the true meaning of Easter and explains why its story has such importance to all Christians. For as the cross is the symbol of suffering and the death of Christ, the empty tomb symbolizes the Risen Lord and all the joy with which Easter Day is celebrated.

The Palms

At the time of Jesus, palms were a sign of victory. They were often given to winners of contests of strength or skill. The fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy of Zechariah also signified Jesus as the Messiah. "Lo,

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During this year of reformation, we are going to take a closer look at the Ten Commandments. In February, we started with the first commandment. Each commandment encourages serious, thoughtful, and truthful self-examination so that you may heartily and sincerely confess, "God be merciful to me as a sinner."



The Third Commandment

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.

My God has given me His Word so that I might know Him and believe in Him. His Word makes me holy. It gives me eternal life and rest from all my enemies.

- Do I strive to make the day of rest holy by making time for the hearing of God's Word and the reception of the Sacrament?
- Do I care about holy living?
- Have I put the desires of my body ahead of the needs of my soul?
- Do I use the Word of God to make my time, work, study, and life holy day by day?
- Have I doubted the truth of God's Word?
- Am I lazy about reading and studying God's Word?
- Have I any fear of God over this neglect?
- Do I honor the Word of God highly by eagerly hearing it preached at the appointed times?
- Do I gladly learn it my heart and live in it?
- Do I despise God's Word by not paying attention when it is read, preached on, or taught in Church?
- Do I love my fellow Christians by being present with them in the divine liturgy to sustain them?

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In Ministry With God's People

We remember in prayer

...**Mary Hogue, Arnie Jacobson, Rod and Karen Lorang, Tamra Moffett, Dawn Payne, Diane Schradler, Emily Standley, Don Weihe, Margaret Wille, Bud Witt and Janet Zulfer.**

...the family of **Carol Childers**, especially **Cindy Childers-Wilbanks** and **Charly Peterson.**

...our youth confirmation class - **Aryanna Hogue, Robbie Moffett, Jr., Kailyn Townsend, Austin Wegner** and **Isabella Wegner.**

...our congregational effectiveness in bringing the Gospel to the hurting of our community.

...the work of **Emad and Shireen Tawadrous** at the Peace International Center.

The Youth Group is participating in **World Vision's 30 Hour Famine**. We don't think it's right that thousands of kids are dying from hunger every day. So we're doing something about it. Our group will learn about hunger, raise funds to help the hungry, and then go hungry ourselves from Friday, April 28th, at 6:00 p.m., to Saturday, April 29th, at 9:00 a.m. at the church.

Here's how you can help:

1. **Pray.** Ask God to bless the Youth Group as they overcome hunger.
2. **Give.** Just \$40 can help feed and care for a child for a month.

We have set a fundraising goal of \$1000. You can donate by making out a check to World Vision and placing it in the offering plate on Sunday. There will also be a special collection taken on Sunday, April 30.

Every day in 2014, 16,000 children under five died — most from preventable causes like hunger. This event is to raise awareness about the millions of people globally that suffer from hunger. Please consider donating to this urgent cause.

—Mount Olive Youth Group with **Dustin** and **Mary Hogue**, 30 Hour Famine Coordinators

Please join us on Tuesday, April 11th, for Mount Olive's Book Club. It will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the home of **Peggy Posey**. **Liz Matson** will bring dessert. We will be discussing *The Moonlit Garden* by Corina Bomann.

Lilly Kaiser had come to terms with her solitary, uncomplicated life after becoming a young widow. So when a stranger delivers an old violin to her Berlin antiques shop and tells Lilly it belongs to her, she's completely bewildered. Why should she be the one to inherit such an exquisite instrument?

Together with her best friend, Ellen, and handsome musicologist Gabriel Thornton, Lilly sets out to explore the violin's legacy. From England to Italy to Indonesia, she follows its winding trail. Along the way, she learns of Rose Gallway, a beautiful woman of English and Sumatran descent who lived among Sumatra's

lush gardens more than a hundred years earlier. A celebrated and sought-after musician, Rose once owned Lilly's violin and regularly played concerts for Sumatra's colonial elite—until, one day, she simply disappeared.

As Lilly unravels the mystery behind Rose's story—and uncovers other unexpected secrets—she'll come to see her own life in an entirely new light. And as each shared discovery brings her closer to Gabriel, her heart might finally break its long-held silence.

Next month, the book selection will be *Tapestry of Fortunes* by Elizabeth Berg. We will meet May 9th at 7:00 p.m. at **Gloria Sorensen's** home.





Mt. Olive Prayer
Chain

If you have a prayer request, please call **Kristi Townsend** at 402-457-9611 or by email at townsend.kristi@gmail.com

Reformation

To commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, Mount Calvary (5529 Leavenworth St.) is hosting a special German Service on Good Friday at 2:00 p.m. Rev. Dr. Klaus Raab from Martinsburg, Nebraska will be the preacher.

Thank You

A huge thank you to **Ron Hurt** for spreading mulch around the plant beds in the parking lot, along the walkways and in front of the church. This major undertaking for one person took lots of trips down to church and countless wheel-barrels of mulch. Thank you, **Ron**.

Thank You

Thank you to **Kathy Mansfield, Sharon McDonald, Barb Stacy and Bonnie White** for helping with the March Messenger.

Thank you to **Barb Stacy** for taking the finished newsletter to the downtown post office.

A special thank you to **Rich Wismont** who takes care of all of the church's recyclables.

Thank you to **Rosalie Soodsma** for weekly lending a hand in the church office.

- **Teresa Kuti**

Supper Quilt

“The Supper Quilt” is returning to Omaha. The quilt is a 15.3’ x 5.5’ work of art modeled on Leonardo da Vinci’s famous work, “The Last Supper.” The quilt is composed of 51,816 one half inch squares of 350 different fabrics. The quilt will be on display during Holy Week, April 14-15, from 10:00 am to 6:20 p.m. at Pacific Hills Lutheran Church (1110 S 90th St). Two special presentations by the quiltmaker, Dr. Don Locke, will be Friday, 5:30 p.m. and Saturday, 3:30 p.m. Check out the website – www.thesupper.net

Shred Day

Need to get rid of unneeded sensitive documents? The Better Business Bureau is hosting a free Shred Event on Saturday, April 22, from 8am to noon in the Methodist Hospital (85th & Dodge St.) parking lot. You can bring up to three boxes or bags of documents and they will shred them for you on the spot.

LCEF Gathering

Members of the Nebraska District LCMS are invited to attend an upcoming LCEF Spring Gathering Event on Saturday, April 8, from 8am - 10am at Concordia Jr./Sr. High School (15656 Fort St) for food and fellowship. To RSVP no later than April 3, complete and submit an online registration form at the Nebraska District website (www.ndlcms.org), by calling Joyce Bruha at the Nebraska District at 402-643-2961, ext. 1011 or by email at joyceb@ndlcms.org.

Prayer Request

One of the overseas missionary families that we support financially is in need of our prayers. **David Bush's** visa has not been approved. He and his wife **Barbara** are awaiting this in order to go to Macau and begin five years of service. **David** will serve as the director of the Concordia English Center in Macau. He will supervise and create curriculum as well as oversee the staff to enable them to be as effective as possible. He will also provide guidance and assistance to the Macau Lutheran Deaf Outreach. **David** has served as a pastor and missionary to the deaf in several Midwest LCMS congregations. As they transition into their new lives, they will be learning Cantonese as well as Chinese sign language. Pray especially for **Barbara** as she is deaf and is nervous about traveling (and living) outside the U.S. for the first time.



OUR MISSIONARIES ABROAD

Mt. Olive is helping to support two missionaries and their families who live abroad. We remember them periodically in our public prayer. We ask that you continue to support them financially with your regular gifts. Information about their work is shared on the north hall bulletin board and in our Sunday worship. May it serve as an encouragement for your continued interest and support. For the year 2017 our missionaries abroad are:

Julie Lutz
 Box 803
 Mt. Hagen,
 Western Highlands
 Province
 Papua New Guinea
lutz.travel@gmail.com

Rev. David & Mrs. Barbara Bush
 1333 S. Kirkwood Rd.
 Attn: Amy Schaefer
 St. Louis, MO 63122
david.bush@lcmsintl.org

Modern Day Gleaning

In the biblical book of Ruth, Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi, are widows during a famine. In those times, there were customary provisions for widows and the poor to ensure they had adequate food. They were allowed to “glean” from the fields, meaning they could gather the extra abundance following a harvest at no cost to them.

Boaz, one of Naomi’s relatives, allowed Ruth to glean from his fields and ordered workers to make sure to leave enough barley behind so that she and Naomi would be well fed. Boaz was blessed for his generosity – soon after, he gained a family in Ruth and Naomi and had a son, Obed. The blessings continued, as Obed became the grandfather of King David.

As the Lord provided Boaz with abundance, he shared it with others. And we can do likewise. We may have an abundance of wealth, time or talents. Whatever gifts we have – large or small – the story of Ruth and Boaz models generous sharing.

National Volunteer Month is an ideal time to share your abundance and offer your gifts.

Volunteering locally:

- **Brings people together.** Gather a group of your friends and brainstorm ways to work together for a common goal of helping out in your community.
- **Is a great chance to learn something.** God reveals new gifts in our lives, even as we are getting older. Volunteering

may help you discover hidden talents you didn’t know you had!

- **Saves the community resources.** Volunteering your time provides valuable community services so more funds can be directed toward other needs.
- **Grows gratitude.** Whether you’re on the giving or receiving end of a gift, that gift can elicit feelings of gratitude – either expressing gratitude or instilling gratitude in the receiver.

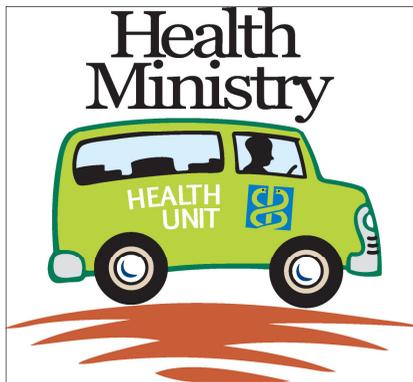
Being open and willing to live generously not only blesses others, but blesses you, too. Knowing that you’re making a difference in someone’s life can bring you unspeakable joy!

This article provided compliments of Thrivent Financial and **Sarah Jank**, Financial Associate, 402.905.4229 sarah.jank@thrivent.com.



Please join the Mount Olive Health Ministry team in welcoming nurse practitioner, **Molly Gunter**. She is planning on making follow up phone calls for those members recently released from the hospital. There is nothing like getting sent home from the hospital, only to find out you don't quite understand your instructions. You can also call **Molly** at 308-627-5985 for any nursing questions you have.

—Mount Olive Health Ministry Team
Victor Padron, Jody Wells-Padron, Kaylee (Fly) Smith



Mark Your Calendar

Mission Central in Mapleton, IA will feature Rev. Greg Seltz, from Lutheran Hour Ministries at an Ascension Day event on May 25. A dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m., followed by a service at 7:00 p.m.

“What a JOY and blessing to welcome the world famous Missionary Speaker, the

Honorable Rev. Greg Seltz, Speaker of the Lutheran Hour broadcasts around the world!” (*Gary Thies, director of Mission Central*)

Mission Central's schedule is filling up with lots of exciting visits from those who work overseas and come to share their stories. Go to the website www.missioncentral.us to see who will be there and to plan your visit.

Service Project for LWML

LWML is hosting a Pajama Prayer Party in Grand Island on Saturday, April 22, 2017. Here at Mount Olive, we are collecting items in the back of church for Foster Care Bags they will be putting together. When children move from one foster home to another they typically can't take anything with them. Lutheran Family Services collects Foster Care Bags and LWML is stepping up to help by putting these bags together at their Pajama Prayer Party. Please consider donating: pajamas for newborn to 12 months and wom-

en's size X-large t-shirts. Also needed are items for boys & girls hygiene kits; deodorant, body spray, body wash, notebook, pen, pencil, new pair of underwear, new pair of socks, chapstick, shampoo, conditioner, razors, shaving cream, shower loofa (net scrubbie), hair ties (for any age girl bag), tampons (for pre-teen & teenage girl bag), panty liners (for pre-teen & teenage girl bag), two gallon Ziploc bag that everything fits into. Please note that all items should be full-sized (not travel or hotel size). Also, when purchasing items, remember that kids in Foster Care can range from newborn to 18 years of age.

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- Am I quick to make excuses for neglecting the divine liturgy to do other things I like more?
- Have I absented myself from the divine liturgy because I was angry at someone else who was there?
- Do I complain about the worship, the pastor, or other people in the congregation?
- Do I learn the Word of God so that I can teach it to others?

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your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on an ass.” *(Zechariah 9:9)*

Good Friday

This is the day when we remember the suffering and sacrifice of our crucified Lord. It seems strange to us that this day should be called “**Good**,” but when we consider that the manifestation of God’s great love and salvation through the resurrection of Easter would not have happened without the crucifixion of Friday, we can see how it could be called “**Good**.”

The Cross

The symbol of Christ’s crucifixion is the cross. It signifies that Christ died for us and that no sacrifice he could make was too great.