

Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 19:13-15

¹³ Then children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them, ¹⁴ but Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." ¹⁵ And he laid his hands on them and went on his way.

Deuteronomy 24: 17-22 (care for alien, orphan, widow)

¹⁷ "You shall not deprive a resident alien or an orphan of justice; you shall not take a widow's garment in pledge. ¹⁸ Remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from there; therefore, I command you to do this.

¹⁹ "When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be left for the alien, the orphan, and the widow, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all your undertakings. ²⁰ When you beat your olive trees, do not strip what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow.

²¹ "When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow. ²² Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I am commanding you to do this.

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God!

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

(After Children's Moment, children age 3 – 5th grade are invited to Children's Church in Room L8, located downstairs. Children will return to the Sanctuary to receive Communion with their families.)

SERMON

~ Rev. Stephanie Bekhor

*HYMN #141 Children of the Heavenly Father

TRYGGARE KAN INGEN VARA

*CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Family of Faith,

every week we pray the Prayer of Confession, because every week, we need to be reminded of God's abundant grace.

Every week we need to be reminded of God's love.

Every week we need to be reminded that we too can grow and change. So, join me in this moment of honesty as we seek transformation. Friends, let us pray:

God said, "When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them."

Holy God, we confess, we have mistreated the immigrants in our land.

Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

We confess, we have clung to war more than we have pursued peace.

God said, "When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow."

We confess, we have hoarded our resources and failed to care for our neighbors.

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not stop them."

We confess, we have gatekept the good news in unfair ways.

Compassionately for all of us, God also said,

"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;

I have called you by name; you are mine."

By God's grace, despite our sin and shortcomings,

we are redeemed, claimed, forgiven, and loved.

May this good news change our lives! Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LENTEN OFFERING SPEAKER

~ Karen McElfish, UMC Apportionment Ministries

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(After each petition, the congregation responds with: Hear our prayer.)

Thanksgiving

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERTORY

Take Up Your Cross, the Savior Said Rebecca Groom te Velde

Take up your cross, the Savior said, if you would my disciple be; take up your cross with willing heart and humbly follow after me. Take up your cross; let not its weight fill your weak spirit with alarm; Christ's strength shall bear your spirit up and brace your heart and nerve your arm. Take up your cross, heed, not the shame, and let your foolish heart be still; the Lord, for you accepted death upon cross on Calvary hill. Take up your cross, then, in Christ's strength, and calmly every danger brave: it guides you to life and lead to victory over the grave.

*DOXOLOGY #296 Sing My Tongue, the Glorious Battle

Unto God, be praise and glory: to the Father and the Son, to the eternal Spirit honor now and evermore be done; praise and glory in the highest, while unending ages run.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

See Musical Setting E on pp. 24B-25C in the *United Methodist Hymnal*.
[We offer a gluten-free element option and always use grape juice, not wine]

THE LORD'S PRAYER *(spoken)*

RECEIVING COMMUNION

Fraction Anthem, Sanctus (Holy)

Gerald R. Near

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Bless it is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Ah, Holy Jesus, Hymn #289 (vv. 1,2,4,5)

Craig Courtney

PRAYER AFTER RECEIVING

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

*HYMN #548 In Christ There Is No East or West

MCKEE

*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

Postlude, in C Op. 28, No. 8

Christian Cappelen

Leading Today's Worship Service:

Preaching: Rev. Stephanie Bekhor

Pastors: Rev. Dr. Sara Keeling, Rev. Stephanie Bekhor

Liturgist: Jane Hanson

Organist/Choirmaster: Jonathan Saint-Thomas

Children's Sharing: Linnea Carlson

Acolyte: Sophia Glandon

Join us for Coffee Fellowship by exiting the side door to the gathering area.

Register your attendance using the QR code below or by using the attendance card located in the pew rack.



Congregational Prayers

Healing and Sympathy:

~For the family and friends of Walter Lundy, father of Charles Lundy, who died on March 5.

For those battling cancer and long-term illness: Heather Weir, Karen Watkins, Elizabeth Carnahan, Jason Micheli, Sally, Christine, Yarikza, Kate Heavner, Peter Joyce, Cindy, Tom Benson, Kay Lewis, Justin, Kent Sapp, Latifa Sharif, Rozanne, Dena, Mary Hays, Susan Newton, Thomas Greving, Sue Mink, Cobi O'Brien, Chi Bahn.

Prayers for the World:

~For peace between the United States and Iran.

~For an end to wars around the world.

To submit a prayer concern go to our website mountolivetumc.com/prayers or use the back of the attendance card.

* * *

Please stand, as able, for those acts of worship marked with an asterisk.*

Words in bold type indicate a congregational response.

Announcements

Lenten Offerings 2026

Our Lenten Offerings this year will benefit two organizations, Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR) and UMC Apportionments.

OAR is a community-based nonprofit organization that envisions a safe and thriving community where those impacted by the legal system enjoy equal civil and human rights.

UMC Apportionment Ministries is dedicated to outreach ministries overseen by the Virginia Annual Conference.

You can donate at the giving link on our website or use the Lenten Offering envelope in the pew rack.

Annual Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday, April 4, 11 AM

It's time for the Annual Easter Egg Hunt! We're gathering at beautiful Woodlawn Park (1325 N. Buchanan Street) to hunt for all the best goodies! Children will be divided by age - but don't be late because we have some expert egg hunters and it goes by fast. Bring a basket and invite your friends. (We may even have a special guest stop by!) Parking is available in the church lot and it's a short walk down the block to Woodlawn Park. Please check your child's eggs for allergens.

Announcements (continued)

Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday, March 29

Regular services at 9:15 AM (Traditional) and 11:15 AM (the Way).

Maundy Thursday, Communion and Tenebrae Service

Thursday, April 2, 7:00 PM

Traditional Communion and Tenebrae service. Tenebrae (the Latin word for darkness) is a service held during the three days preceding Easter Day, and characterized by gradual extinguishing of candles, and by a loud noise taking place in total darkness near the end of the service.

Easter Morning

Sunday, April 5

Traditional Worship at 9:15 AM, Sanctuary

A festive service with choir and brass. This service will be live-streamed. Children will be invited to Children's church after the children's message to hear the Easter story and make a craft.

Easter Breakfast, 10 AM - 11:15 AM

Join us for Easter breakfast! Please register at the Signupgenius on our website so that we will have enough food to serve and if you would like to make a breakfast casserole (baked and ready to serve) or help prep or serve breakfast.

Family Worship at 11 AM, Sanctuary

Child-friendly Easter worship experience.

The Way (Modern worship) at 11:15 AM in the Fellowship Hall. Children will be invited to Children's church after the children's message to hear the Easter story and make a craft.

Children's Activities from 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Join us for fun activities on the playground including, glitter tattoos, crafts and a petting zoo.

Nursery for kids 3 and under available from 9 AM until 12:30 PM.

Spring Clean-Up Day

Mount Olivet's Spring Clean-up Day will be Saturday, March 21, 8:30 am. Our outdoor projects will include planting spring flowers and mulching; our inside projects will include cleaning the Sanctuary pews. Sign up at the Signupgenius link on our website. Have a project you'd like added to the list? Contact Ann Speicher at alspeicher7@gmail.com

Find additional announcements and more on our website mountolivetumc.com or subscribe to our weekly e-news.



MOUNT
OLIVET
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

March 15, 2026, 9:15 am

Welcome to worship at Mount Olivet! Whether this is your first time here or you are a regular attendee, may you feel at home in this sanctuary and with the people of this community. May you be inspired by worship and experience the peace and grace of God (Micah 6:8).

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

Panis Angelicus

César Franck

*CALL TO WORSHIP

God loves the field mouse.

God loves the crows that take flight when church bells ring.

God loves the baby, cooing in the back pew.

God loves the child who rocks and claps.

God loves the one with wrinkled hands and soft eyes.

God loves the bumblebees and the tabby cats.

God loves those who walk, crawl, and roll.

**God loves the giant oaks and the evergreens,
standing strong over all of us.**

God loves the young, the impressionable, and the earnest.

There is no bit of creation that God does not love.

So let us worship this good-news God!

God is here. Love is real. Joy is on the move.

Let us worship our with-us God!

*HYMN #269 Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days

LAND OF REST

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Holy One,

sometimes the simplest of your commands

are the hardest for us to hear.

You say, "Love your enemy."

"Turn the other cheek."

"Care for the widow and the orphan."

And we want to know: How? When? Where?

Today as we turn to your word, open up space in us

to simply hear your truth for what it is. Open up space

in our hearts to dream new dreams, to imagine new realities,

to draw closer to you and closer to love.

With hope for a better tomorrow, we listen, we pray. Amen.