



WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT WE GATHER ON THE DAKOTA HOMELAND

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Ingrid C. A. Rasmussen and Doug Mork, Pastors; David Rojas Martinez, Deacon

## REFLECTIONS ON FIRE BY NIGHT:

### FINDING GOD IN THE PAGES OF THE OT, CHS 1-3

Even Melissa Florer-Bixler's title drew me back to my own transformative encounters with the Old Testament, 40 years ago this fall. I had grown up in the church, child of faithful and active parents who shared their love of God and of Christian community very clearly. I had been taught all those Sunday School approved Old Testament stories, some even in hi-tech flannel board. And I had heard those little snippets of Old Testament every week in the First Lesson and the Psalm, always read but rarely preached, often sounding as if they came from a very different age of the world. I was still imagining scripture primarily as a set of instructions from God to us, sometimes told in story. As I started to think more deeply about the important issues of the time, I was searching for a framework that would let me lean into the good passages (like the prophets) as authoritative while dismissing the problematic ones (I'll bet you have your own list). I was looking for a hermeneutic that worked for me, a way of understanding how to read scripture and what authority to give it in my life. Florer-Bixler asks a similar question: *How do we read these words written in a world so different from ours, stories that are both ruthless and filled with grace?* (p.17)

I won't dwell on my story here. Suffice it to say that reading the Old Testament in class, as literature, with a mix of Christians, Jews, and folks who claimed no religious tradition at all, blew it wide open for me. At almost the same time, a chance encounter with Hasidism through Elie Wiesel's book "Souls on Fire" sealed the deal. So many new ideas: the power of leaning into historical and social context and location; the way we encounter truth in stories, both in the bible and other places; different ways of reading different kinds of material; religious communities (Hasidic Jews) finding God's presence and activity in the Hebrew Bible in places I would never have thought to look. I have been fascinated with the Old Testament ever since.

The first three chapters of "Fire by Night" make a powerful case for encountering God in the Old Testament. In many ways, the first chapter is about taking social location seriously. Who we are and what we are bringing with us matters. Who spoke and wrote these stories in the past matters. The history of how these stories have been used and abused matters. The story of the rabbis arguing over the clay oven illustrates

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## SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

### READINGS

*Zechariah 9:9-12; Psalm 145:8-14;  
Romans 7:15-25a; Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30*

### ADULT FORUM

*Holy Trinity Adult Forums feature in-person presentations beginning at 11:15 a.m. on Sunday. The presentations are also available via [Zoom](#) for those unable to attend in person. ID 858 5687 1594; Password 317879.*

#### July 9 "Words of Worship"

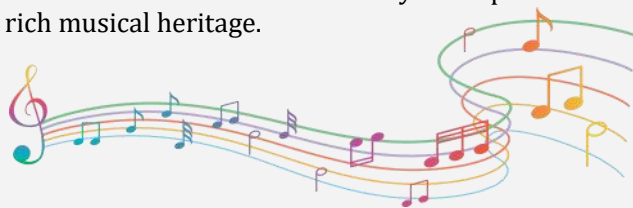
**Pastor Doug Mork and Deacon David Rojas Martinez**

Pastor Doug and Deacon David will present and lead a conversation on our use of language in worship. While Holy Trinity has done much work on inclusivity and expansiveness in our scripture, liturgy, preaching and hymnody, it will always be a work in progress. Where have you found new language helpful? Where do you find challenges? What has changed in the values and concerns you bring to worship language?

#### July 16 "The Legacy of Lutheran Hymnody"

**Cantor Phil Radtke**

Join cantor Phil Radtke in the library for a presentation on our rich musical heritage.



### OLIVE OIL FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

Bottles of fresh olive oil are available in two sizes: 250mL bottles for \$15 and 750 mL bottles for \$35. Purchases support the work of the Lutheran World Federation vocational training program and reduce student fees. Brought to you by the Palestine-Israel Working group. Contact the [office](#) to purchase.

### ~ Concerning People ~

We pray today for all those in need of God's tender care, especially those who face illness, sorrow, or hard times. We pray for **Deb Anderson**, recovering from surgery; **Mary Paavola**, recovering from a fall; **Ann Schrooten**, recovering from surgery; **Dorothy Kelly**; **Cori Gershon**; **Mark Symchych**.

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beautifully both their intensity of engagement with scripture and with God and the ways in which scripture is released “into the care and keeping of God’s people.” (p.33)

In her second chapter, Florer-Bixler lifts out neighborliness as a fundamental theme of the Old Testament. I appreciate her lean into Leviticus, not a simple read, and the deep connection Leviticus makes between how faithfulness to God and God’s commandments shows up in love of neighbor. By really paying attention to its context, she demonstrates the ways scripture is always adapting. *God’s life works itself out within different people in every age, life springing up within us.* (p. 52)

Florer-Bixler calls chapter three, *God of Victims*. It’s a powerful chapter, turning to the *pervasive evil that rips apart human communities* (p. 55). She spends much of her time in dialog with Genesis 19, the Sodom and Gomorrah story. While she names the painful ways this story has been misused through the centuries, in it she discovers “a God who is with and for the most vulnerable of our world.” (p. 57) Throughout the chapter, she reminds us that although the contexts may be different from our own, in this story and others we find God showing up for the victims of systemic, institutional violence and oppression. Here sin is not an individual problem but is “corporate and endemic” (p. 69), and God’s response is to challenge the whole community to open their eyes.

~ Reflection by Pastor Doug

Next week, chapters 4-6, reflection by Matt Floding!

## JULY 2023: ALL-CONGREGATION READ WITH PASTOR DOUG, DEACON DAVID, JOYCE BESSER, AND MATT FLODING

Thanks to a sabbatical grant that Holy Trinity received for Pastor Ingrid’s time away, many households received a candle and a copy of a book by Pastor Melissa Florer-Bixler entitled “Fire By Night.” The book invites us to marvel at a God who travels with people through cloud and fire, by day and by night, since the beginning of time. Florer-Bixler calls the Old Testament a book of fire—reading it draws us close to God’s love which continues to burn away our expectations and set us ablaze.

Leaders will include a short reflection on the reading each Thursday in the Community Church newsletter: July 6 on chapters 1-3; July 13 on chapters 4-6; July 20 on chapters 7-9; July 27 on chapters 10-11. Please read along with us!

A reminder: if you received a copy of *Fire By Night* in the mail, please consider dropping it off at the church in the basket in the Community Room when you are done so others can read it.



## HAPPENING THIS WEEK

### THURSDAYS, JULY 13, 20, 27, AND AUGUST 3—LONGFELLOW SUMMER SING

This first annual Summer Sing will take place on Thursdays from 6:00 to 7:30 p. m. in the Sanctuary at Holy Trinity and will provide a space for novice to professional, young to old, shy, and confident to join together. We will sing sacred and secular pieces in different styles by composers local and abroad that promote community and music making. Local choir director, G. Phillip Shoultz, III will be the guest clinician. Phillip is the Associate Artistic Director of VocalEssence as well as Cantor at Westwood Lutheran Church. Questions and sign-up can be directed to Phil Radtke ([pradtke@htlcmpls.org](mailto:pradtke@htlcmpls.org)).



### FRIDAY-SATURDAY, JULY 14-15—MOTHER ST. JAMES AME 160TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Mother St. James AME, the oldest Black church in Minnesota and our ministry partner, is celebrating their 160th Anniversary. They warmly invite Holy Trinity members and friends to the following events:

**Friday, July 14—Youth Block Party and BBQ  
Mother St. James (3600 Snelling)**

**Saturday, July 15—Anniversary Banquet  
University Baptist Church (1219 University Ave SE)**

Program leaders include storyteller Nothando Zulu, President of the MN Black Storytellers Alliance, who will be telling the story of Mother St. James; Rev. Marchelle Hallman, the first woman of the AMEC appointed to the position of Head Pastor in Minnesota and who led Mother St. James from 2003-2016; the gospel band known as “The Men of New Hope”; and HTLC’s very own Pastor Ingrid has been invited to offer a prayer for the evening.

Free rides available through Metro Transit July 14 and 15, 2023!

For more information on these events:  
[www.motherstjames.com/160th-anniversary.html](http://www.motherstjames.com/160th-anniversary.html)





## SAVE THE DATE

### SUNDAY, JULY 16—"KIDSLIT IS LIT" CHILDREN'S BOOK FESTIVAL AT MOON PALACE, 10:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M.

Come join us for a FREE family friendly event in the green space between Moon Palace Books and The Hub in South Minneapolis. We will be hosting dozens of local children's book authors and artists/makers. Yummy food and treats, including MN Nice Cream, will also be there. And of course, the beloved bouncy castle! Free event but [tickets](#) are required.

### THURSDAY, JULY 20—ENCORE! AT TURTLE BREAD

The Encore! group (congregants 50+) is bringing Turtle Bread breakfasts back! Encore! meets monthly at 8:00 a.m. at Turtle Bread (4205 E. 34th St.). There is no agenda. Breakfast goes simply get to know one another. No sign up necessary.

### SATURDAY, JULY 22—METAMORPHOSIS: ANGELA TWO STARS

Metamorphosis: "a change of the form or nature of a thing or person into a completely different one, by natural or supernatural means." Metamorphosis is a participatory installation by artist, Angela Two Stars and in collaboration with Pangea World Theater, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, and Longfellow Rising. Metamorphosis acts as phase II of The Transition Stage (2021), a temporary community cocoon installation, which served as a vessel for community laments, hopes, dreams, and mottos of strength as the Longfellow neighborhood and the city of Minneapolis moved towards growth, redevelopment, and healing after the 2020 murder of George Floyd and subsequent uprisings that caused destruction and devastation to the Longfellow neighborhood.

Metamorphosis is a 2-sided mural. One side features the compilation of written community contributions, a reminder of the losses experienced after the uprisings of 2020 but also a reminder of the resilience and hope of the Longfellow neighborhood and how together, we can rebuild.

The other side of the artwork, a butterfly scene, the representation of the transformation, rebuilding, and strength of the community. Interactive chrysalis sculptural art forms will invite audience participation to enter and emerge from the discarded chrysalis "transformed," a metaphor of the rebuilt neighborhood. Community engagement activities held throughout the festival will invite the audience to create their own butterfly designs to add to the artwork. Location: Former MIGIZI site, 3017 27th Ave. S.



### SATURDAY, JULY 22—COCKTAILS IN DEB SODT'S GARDEN

Member Deb Sodt loves two things: gardening and craft cocktails. Join her in her backyard for garden cocktails (both alcohol and nonalcoholic drinks will be served) and conversation. Sign up in the Community Room soon, as each gathering is limited to eight participants!

### SUNDAY, JULY 23—MUSIC IN THE GARDEN

There is no adult forum today. We invite all to join us for music and food in the garden at 11:00 a.m. (immediately following the 10:00 a.m. service). It promises to be fabulous. \$5 suggested donation for lunch; however, don't let the money keep you away from the fun. All are welcome!



### WEDNESDAY, JULY 26—SUMMER FAMILY FUN NIGHT



Let's take advantage of the lingering sunny days and come together from 5:30-6:30 p.m. for a night of food, fun, and friendly connections. Today we will have water games and remember our baptism! Wear clothes that can get wet. We'll provide everything, just bring your family! Hosted by the Children and Family Team.

### VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL AUGUST 14-17, 2023, 9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Please know that Cantor Phil, the pastors, and other staff members are excited for the possibilities of what Vacation Bible School (VBS) will look like in August. We are imagining four days of learning about faith-filled responses to injustices in our neighborhood and greater society. There will be music, food, games, stories, and lots more every day of VBS!

Please call the office to register (612-729-8358). We hope you will consider joining us!

Questions can be sent to Deacon David ([drojasmartinez@htlcmpls.org](mailto:drojasmartinez@htlcmpls.org)).

## COTTAGE MEETINGS

### COTTAGE MEETINGS—FINAL WEEKS

We are in the final weeks for Cottage Meetings. If you have not had a chance to attend one yet and would like to, please RSVP to the church office (612-729-8358 / [office@htlcmpls.org](mailto:office@htlcmpls.org)) to one of the following meetings happening in July. There are only a handful of spots left!

We needed to make changes to a couple of gatherings, below is the updated list of Cottage meetings happening in July:

July 11, 6:00 p.m. — Grill Out, Hosted by Karen Kunze & Ben Koch (2820 Huron St, Roseville) **One spot left!**

July 15, 9:30-11:30 a.m. — Brunch, Hosted by Nikki & Ben Martinez (4324 Vera Cruz Ave N, Robbinsdale) **A few spots left!**

July 15 and July 22, 12:00 p.m. — Lunch, Hosted by Zoe Martinez (3321 32nd Ave S) **These gatherings are full!**

July 20, 5:00-6:00 p.m. — Best Bites and Beverage, Happy Hour. by Matt & Marcia Floding (Becketwood—Kensington Square, 4300 W River Pkwy) **A few spots left!**

July 25, 7:00 p.m. — Dessert Gathering, Hosted by Libby & Keith Olstad (120 Valleyview Place) **A couple of spots left, this is the last Cottage meeting.**

<b>WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS FOR SUNDAY, JULY 9, 2023</b>	
Preacher	Doug Mork
Presiding Minister	David Rojas Martinez
Crucifer	Katie Schroeder
Cantor	Pam Kildahl
Assisting Minister	Carol Masters
Communion	Kris Christians, Nicki Hines, Sue Roberts, Wayne Vetter
Ushers	Kathy Hollander, Rod Johnson, David Broberg, Joy Nelson
Altar Guild	Tom and Julie Cahoy
Coffee Servers	Sally Kohlstedt, Liz Kelley
Counters	Wayne Vetter, Debora Helm
Video Operator	Jan Mehlhoff
Closer	Roberta Shaw



A few photos from some of the Holy Trinity Flower Gardens, thanks to loving care from Kathy Hollander and Rod Johnson

#### PARISH EVENTS JULY 9-JULY 15, 2023

Sunday, July 9	10:00 AM 2:00 PM	Worship Service of Holy Communion Swahili Service
Tuesday, July 11	11:00 AM 6:45 PM	Worship Readings Discussion Big Meeting Night!
Thursday, July 13	6:00 PM	Longfellow Summer Sing

#### LIVESTREAM LINKS FOR WORSHIP SERVICES

A [live-stream](#) of the 10:00 a.m. Sunday service is available online at 9:55 a.m.  
You can access recordings of previous worship services [here](#).

