



The Olive Branch

SUNDAY READINGS

Sunday, December 19
Fourth Sunday of Advent
 Micah 5:2-5a
 Luke 1:46b-55
 Hebrews 10:5-10
 Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

Sunday, December 26
First Sunday of Christmas
 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
 Psalm 148
 Colossians 3:12-17
 Luke 2:41-52

Accent on Worship

Bishop's 2021 Christmas Greeting

This is our second pandemic Christmas. We thought this would be over so long ago. And still, we wear masks; we're physically distant; we can't be with friends and family as we used to do. And also, there's so much that's broken in this world, so much that tells us, "Why have hope? Just give up."

But we have a hope that's stronger than any of this, stronger even than death. The hope of God comes in the form of a tiny baby, a helpless child; nevertheless, who grew to a man and in his fragile strength was willing to die on the cross and was raised again.

I don't know what next Christmas will bring. I don't know what New Year's will bring. But I do know we have hope.

St. Paul put it this way:

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Merry Christmas, dear church.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
 Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Wed., December 15

10 am – Staff meeting
 5:30 pm - Children's
 Choir (on Zoom)
7 pm –Advent Vespers
 7:40 pm - Cantorei
 rehearsal

Thurs., December 16

7 pm – Narcotics
 Anonymous

Fri., December 17

7pm – Recovery Group

Sun., December 19

**Fourth Sunday of
 Advent**
9 am – Holy Eucharist
11 am – Holy Eucharist
(livestreamed)

Tues., December 21

9 am – Hanging the
 Greens
 Noon – Bible Study

Wed., December 22

10 am – Staff meeting
 5:30 pm - Children's
 Choir (on Zoom)
7 pm –Advent Vespers
 No Cantorei rehearsal
 this night

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

Sunday Morning Schedule

There are **two worship services each Sunday morning, at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.** To be able to continue COVID-related safety measures, we ask the following:

During this time, we will continue to request R.S.V.P responses for each worship in order to allow for physical distancing in the sanctuary. You no longer need to check your name off before proceeding to worship. We will continue to require that you wear a well-fitting mask that covers your **nose and mouth**. Please do not move the pew ropes, to help with social distancing, and **please** leave the short pews for those with wheelchairs. Coffee hour has been temporarily suspended.

The link to RSVP for worship is

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/mountolive> .

This link will be live each Wednesday for the following Sunday.

[Click here to sign up for midweek Advent Evening Prayer.](#)

The sign-up for midweek services will be available Sunday-Wednesday of each week during Advent.

Sign up for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Liturgies!

Beginning today, December 15, you can sign up to attend Christmas Eve and Christmas Day liturgies at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/Christmasliturgies>

If you aren't able to access this sign-up by computer, please call the church office and we will be happy to get you signed up.

Alternative Gift Giving Advent Tree

The Missions Committee is promoting the idea of alternative gift giving this Christmas. Check out the Advent Trees in the west assembly room. They have ornaments representing gifts from ELCA Good Gifts and Common Hope in Guatemala.

Advent Giving Tree

1. Select the ornament representing the gift you would like to give.
2. Place payment in the envelope (check or cash).
3. Check off on the envelope which gift you chose.
4. Put the envelope in the black lock box, located behind the long credenza on the right side. (If you prefer to pay with credit card, Common Hope has that option. Fill out a donation card and place it in the envelope.)



You can also place an order directly with:

Lutheran World Relief	https://lwr.org/giving-category/gifts
Heifer Project International	http://www.heifer.org
Bethania Kids	http://bethaniakids.org/creative-giving-catalog/
ELCA	www.elca.org/goodgifts
Common Hope	https://commonhopecatalog.myshopify.com/

Stewardship Alternatives

Giving stock or a distribution from your retirement account can be a good way to support Mount Olive and its ministries. If you give stock or funds from your tax-deferred retirement account, please keep the following in mind:

- Your brokerage firm may not divulge your name to us unless you ask them to do so. We may not know whom to thank.
- Generally, brokerages will not indicate the Mount Olive fund or budget to which you would like the gift applied.

Therefore, when you give stock or a retirement distribution to Mount Olive, please contact the Mount Olive Treasurer via email, treasurer@mountolivechurch.org, or leave a message for the Treasurer letting him or her know:

- Who you are
- The amount of your gift
- Where you would like it applied, such as to the Mount Olive operating fund or the Boldly into the Future capital appeal

Thank you.

Fair Trade Gift Sale

The Missions Committee is continuing the tradition hosting a virtual Fair Trade Sale. Mount Olive members and friends can use this custom link <https://www.serrv.org/?a=MountOlive21> to buy handmade gifts through SERRV International. By using this special link 20% of all purchases will be donated to Mount Olive in support of our new Circle of Welcome work, helping to resettle an Afghan family to our area.

The Fair Trade Sale link is active until December 17. Orders need to be placed online through our custom link. Be sure when you are shopping that you see this orange banner at the top of the page. Keep in mind the shipping delays we are experiencing and be sure to order early!

20% of your online order today will be donated to Mount Olive Afghan Resettlement

Fair Trade coffee, cocoa, and chocolate from Equal Exchange is available for purchase on Sunday mornings. It is on the credenza in the west assembly room with envelopes and instructions for payment. If you prefer to order on your own, go to <https://equalexchange.coop/>.

ARTISANS IN PERU

SERRV partner since 1992

Peru

Your purchase creates a modest but sustainable income for small artisan groups in marginalized areas of Peru, giving them access to training, loans, health care, and school supplies for their children.

Since 1992, SERRV International has partnered with artisans in Peru, providing a long-term trading partnership and interest-free advance payment for our orders. Through sales of their products, artisans can have improved living and working conditions, sustainable employment, and financial advances for raw materials.



"I was hungry and you gave me food"... (Matthew 25:35)

Mount Olive volunteers have continued to meet the challenge of providing wholesome meals to the residents of Our Savior's Shelter in this time of Covid. We hope you will consider participating in this ministry in 2022.

Mount Olive provides the Our Savior's meal the second Sunday of each month. It is COVID risk free since you will have no contact with the residents. Here are the dates for 2022: January 9, February 13, March 13, April 10, May 8, June 12, July 10, August 14, September 11, October 9, November 13, and December 11.

Please contact Elaine Halbardier for further information (ech914@comcast.net; 763-639-7702). Elaine will create "teams" based on your preferences for each date.

Susan Cherwien Update

Dear friends/family,

On December 2, upon the recommendation of Susan's Oncologist (with which we agreed), we have ceased treatments, and have entered at-home hospice care. This will allow Susan to be more comfortable, more whole, for the rest of her days without the strain of the chemotherapy and radiation. We don't know how long her body will hold out against its cancerous intrusion, but for now she is at least comfortable and, with the help of medication, mostly pain-free. The predominant symptom is that she is tired and sleeps a lot.

We are so grateful for the love and care shown by so many of you in many and various ways. We also hope you understand that while it is still Susan's intention to respond to each of the cards/gifts she has received, her ability to do so has become impaired. The gratitude, however, is quite strong.

We know that God is indeed with us through all of this. And we trust, as Susan's hymn so perfectly states: "As winters come, as winters must, we breathe our last, return to dust. Still held in Christ, our souls take wing and trust the promise of the spring." (O Blessed Spring, ELW 447). You can find more information on her CaringBridge page at <https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/susanpalocherwien>

Love to you all from both of us,
- Cantor David Cherwien

Book Discussion

The Mount Olive Book Discussion group meets on the second Saturday of each month, beginning at 10:00 am. They have resumed meeting at church.

On January 8, they will finish (delayed because of the snow on Dec 11) discussion of *Hamnet* and then move on to *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare. On February 12, they will discuss *The Seed Keeper* by Diane Wilson.

Tuesday Noon Bible Study Link

The Tuesday Noon Bible Study is meeting in person, in the West Lounge. For those who are unable to come in person, we will continue to hold the meeting 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](#).

Afghan Resettlement—Waiting for a Family

UPDATE #2: Join one of five teams

We are moving into action!! You are invited to pick a team that matches your gifts and interest. Connie Marty is coordinating all of our efforts.



- 1. Mentor Team.** This team will have the most direct contact with our family, for instance, going shopping with them, helping them read their mail, helping the kids with homework. This team should have 5–10 members.
- 2. Nesting Team.** This team will collect furniture and household goods, arrange the apartment so the family, when they come to Minnesota, can move from temporary housing (arranged by LSS) to an apartment ready to live in. We already have significant donations. The team will inventory what we have, work to get what we still need, and move everything to the apartment when it is available.
- 3. Meal Team.** This team will use a list provided by LSS to shop for culturally appropriate items to stock the family's pantry. This work can start as soon as the team is formed.
- 4. Impact Expansion Team.** This team will explore how Mount Olive can work with LSS to expand our impact beyond our single family.
- 5. Community Learning Team.** This team will help Mount Olive members learn more about our family's culture, life situation, and how we can encourage diversity in our community. This could, for example, entail forming a book study group or planning on-line learning sessions for us.

Your Missions Committee and Vestry have committed the initial \$3,500, and together we will work to get the additional \$3,000–\$4,000 that's required.

LSS will use these funds to secure housing, to assist with the first 2–3 months rent, and to serve as case managers for the family. **If you wish to donate to this effort, mark your gift as "Afghan Resettlement."**

LSS will offer training for the Mentor Team, and others may access the training videos as they wish. This will include cultural competency training.

Check out this video from another Afghan family recently resettled here:

<https://www.lssmn.org/services/refugees/support-refugees> .

We anticipate that our family will arrive in early January. Email Connie Marty at <mailto:conniemarty@gmail.com> (note correction from last week's OB) or at <mailto:missions@mountolivechurch.org>. Or call Connie at 651-468-1632, or Judy Hinck at 612-812-7342.



Capital Appeal Update: Strong Progress to Celebrate; More to Do

Through your generous support, Mount Olive is making significant progress toward paying off nearly \$1.6 million in outstanding debt associated with our 2017 building improvements. There is more to do, but there's also much to celebrate. We are pleased to share the highlights of our *Boldly into the Future* capital appeal to date:

More than \$600,000 has been committed

As of December 3, total gifts and pledges from members and friends of Mount Olive totaled nearly \$510,000. Of that, more than \$128,000 was pledged or given since October 24 when the Mount Olive Foundation and Mount Olive Vestry announced that each would match up to \$100,000 in future gifts or pledges. Thus, with gifts, pledges and a \$100,000 match from the Foundation, more than \$610,000 has been committed to debt reduction.

With gifts given, we've reduced our principal – and the cost of servicing our debt

Funds given since the appeal began in August total more than \$228,000. Of these funds, \$225,000 have been applied to our loan principal. This reduction will save us more than \$50,000 over the remaining 19-year mortgage term.

Our challenge: Raise new gifts and pledges to activate the Vestry's \$100,000 match.

If you have not yet pledged or given to the capital appeal, please consider doing so. Your gift or pledge will help us raise the additional funds (about \$72,000) needed to activate the Vestry's match of \$100,000. Currently, about 22 percent of Mount Olive giving units have pledged or given to the appeal. With broader participation, we have an excellent opportunity to meet or exceed our match goal. When we meet the Vestry's match, overall commitments to the campaign will total \$782,000.

Year-end giving: Please consider a contribution to the capital appeal

As you plan your year-end giving, please add the *Boldly into the Future* capital appeal to your list. Gifts of money, stock, and retirement distributions are welcomed. To ensure that gifts of stock or retirement funds are applied according to your wishes, please contact the Mount Olive Treasurer (treasurer@mountolivechurch.org).

From all of us on the Boldly into the Future Steering Committee, thank you. We are grateful for your generosity and your commitment to Mount Olive and its ministries.

Chandler Molbert (chair)
Lora Dundek
Hannah Rivard
Consuelo Gutierrez-Crosby
Gretchen Campbell-Johnson, Vestry President
Joseph Crippen, Pastor

Judy Hinck
Dan Wade
Doug Parish
Dixie Berg

Neighborhood Ministry Partner of the Month: December

Our Neighborhood Ministry Partner for November is an organization called Tubman. The description below is adapted from the Tubman web site and describes their work and mission more eloquently than we ever could.

Safety, hope, and healing are three words that define the heart of Tubman's mission. "For more than 40 years, [Tubman has] worked to advance opportunities for change so that every person can experience safety, hope, and healing."

"Each year, [they] help an estimated 25,000 people in Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington counties and the surrounding area get the services, support, and information they need after experiencing trauma – including relationship violence, sexual assault and exploitation, trafficking, addiction, mental health issues and more. [They] serve people of all ages and genders and offer a broad continuum of services to help people find the support and information they need.

Today, "Tubman continues the work of our namesake, Harriet Tubman, by leading the way to hope and honoring Harriet's personal motto to 'Keep going.'"

Mount Olive has chosen to support each of our Partners of the Month through a yearly contribution from our budget, but on top of that, we encourage any member who wishes to contribute 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.

Staff Christmas Gifts

As is our tradition, this is the time of year that we gather monetary gifts for our church staff. If you would like to contribute, please either use the offering envelope provided especially for this, or simply note "staff gifts" on your check/envelope and send it to the church office or place it in the offering plate on Sunday morning. Please have the gifts in by Sunday, December 19.

Thanks for your generosity.

In Our Prayers

Please pray throughout the week for the following persons: Julia Adams; Joe & Elizabeth Beissel; Nancy Flatgard; Leila Froehlich; Leanna Kloempken; Mary Lee; Carla Manuel; Carolyn Mowery; Rhoda Nelson; George Oelfke; Jerry Ostlund; Robin Rayfield; Evelyn Royce; John Salvesson; Pariann Schenk; John Wall; James Wilkes; *Adalyn Lerum*, relative of Nancy Anderson; *Danna Nelson*, *Gerry Coleman*, friends of Jim Bargmann; *Tom McCarr*, friend of Keith Bartz; *Cassandra Thompson*, friend of Al Bostelmann; *Scott Spooner*, son of Cathy Bosworth; *Sara Brunette*, daughter-in-law of CJ Brunette; *Arthur Kaemmer*, friend of David Bryce; *Lela Frazier*, sister of Irene Campbell; *Klarrisa Ramirez*, friend of Gretchen Campbell-Johnson; *Kristin Eklund-Johnson*, *Greg Eklund*, *Ryan Snelling*, daughter, son, and friend of Harry & Jeanette Eklund; *Juls and Nel Clausen*, friends of Darrell & Mary Golnitz; *Joe & Brenda Patnaude*, friends of Tom Graves & Ginny Agresti; *David G. Gutierrez, Sr.*, *Chris and David Gutierrez, Jr.*, father and brothers of Consuelo Gutierrez-Crosby; *Carol Halter* (*missionary in Hong Kong*), friend of Eunice Hafemeister; *Norma Pera and Hilde Dobberpuhl*, sisters of Eunice Hafemeister and aunts of Linda Hafemeister; *Cat Robinette*, friend of Emily Hellerich; *Tami Huisinga*, relative of Wes Huisinga; *Craig Cunningham*, brother-in-law of Brian Jacobs; *Bob Adamson*, relative of Jerry Jones & Robbie Ross; *Barbara Dabl*, sister of Carla Manuel; *Dani Olson*, *Harper Linquist*, *Steve Camper*, relatives and friend of Julie Manuel; *Jan McCuen*, mother of Matt McCuen; *Brenda Frankman*, friend of Rachel Meurett; *Martha Johnson*, sister of Rhoda Nelson and aunt of Sherry Nelson; *Kathleen Austad*, sister of Jerry Ostlund; *Kirsty Langfield*, cousin of Gary Pagel; *Dn. Steven Arnold*, friend of Andrew Stoebig; *Sue Smith*, *Steve Swanson*, and *Mary Peterson* friends of Dwight Penas & Kathy Thurston; *Vince DeLusia*, friend of Cynthia Prosek; *Rudd Rayfield*, *Jolie Mesbeshber Hassler*, *Katehyn Bowden*, *Cindy Williams*, father and friends of Robin Rayfield; *Annette Olson*, friend of Teresa Rothausen; *Leila Jeffers*, mother of Lynn and Lisa Ruff; *Miranda Ahvis*, niece of Tim Sneer; *Carrie*, friend of Paul & Melissa Stone; *David Duran*, friend of *Kevin Vazquez*; *Andrew Wiechman*, son of Grace Wiechman; *Rachel Wilkes*, former wife of James Wilkes; *Judy Bonnes*, *Tommie and Susie Hunter*; *Barbara C. Johnson*, friends of Mount Olive.

At the death of: Charlotte Erlandson; *Frances Nordeen*, mother of Lisa Nordeen.

For those in hospice care: Susan Cherwien; Berta Wick.

Prayers for all in the health care system here and around the world who put their lives at risk to care for those infected with COVID 19 and caring for all others who are ill as well.

Our continual prayers are offered for peace: We pray for all the world's governments, leaders, and peoples, especially for those who work overseas toward peace: *Ross Chambers*, nephew of Berta & Bob Wick; *Solveig & Philip*, daughter and son-in-law of Karen Johnson; and *Tyson Crosby*, relative of the Crosby family. (*Italics indicates non-member friends of Mount Olive.*)

About our prayer list ...

If you have submitted a name or names to be published on our prayer list, please review the list regularly, to make sure those for whom we are praying are still in need of our prayers. Contact the church office with any updates.



Mount Olive Lutheran Church

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*A congregation of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

Contact Us

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Church Staff

Pastor – [Joseph Crippen](#)

Interim Cantor – [Dietrich Jessen](#)

Vicar – [Andrea Bonneville](#)

Administrative Assistant – [Cha Posz](#)

Coordinator of Neighborhood

Ministries - [Jim Barymann](#)

Christmas Worship Schedule

Friday, Dec. 24, Christmas Eve - Holy Eucharist at 4 pm and 10 pm

Saturday, Dec. 25, Christmas Day - Holy Eucharist at 10 am

Sunday, Dec. 26, First Sunday of Christmas - Holy Eucharist at 9 & 11 am

Saturday, Jan. 1, 2022, The Name of Jesus - Holy Eucharist at 10 a.m.

Sunday, Jan. 2, Second Sunday of Christmas - Holy Eucharist at 9 & 11 am

Thursday, Jan. 6, Epiphany of Our Lord - Holy Eucharist at 7 pm

Sign up for Christmas Eve/Day services beginning December 15!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/Christmasliturgies>