



The Olive Branch

SUNDAY READINGS

Sunday, December 26

First Sunday of Christmas

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26

Psalm 148

Colossians 3:12-17

Luke 2:41-52

Sunday, January 2

*Second Sunday of
Christmas*

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Psalm 147:12-20

Ephesians 1:3-14

John 1:1-18

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

Accent on Worship

Dietrich Jessen

"All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God"

- Psalm 98:3b

My wife and I were shopping for some mums this past October to prepare for our annual autumn party we host in our backyard, and we were running out of luck. It was late in the season and most greenhouses and hardware stores were sold out, leaving us in a state of panic about what we were going to do without the stereotypical late-summer-colored plants. Our last stop was at the Home Depot in Bloomington and before I could even ask about mums, I was greeted with the music of Irving Berlin "I'm dreaming of a white Christmas . . ." "I was floored! It appears Christmas decorations, celebrations, and planning is happening earlier and earlier as the years go by.

You see, I thoroughly enjoy the season of Advent – the season we are closing the book on here. It helps us prepare our hearts for the Christ Child – the one who has come to us yet one of us. And somehow, the secular nature of our lives wants to go right to the good stuff – the parties, the presents, the early Christmas carols, etc. What is our celebration without the appropriate meditation and preparedness?

Advent has prepared us to celebrate the "victory of our God." One of my favorite Psalms, Psalm 98, eloquently describes the majestic nature of this glorious season, which starts on December 24th at the Feast of the Nativity. We are reminded to "shout with joy..." and to "let the sea roar and all that fills it..." This is surely a cause of celebration – a celebration that is warranted after a season of hope and expectation.

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WEEKLY CALENDAR

Wed., December 22

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

Thurs., December 23

7 pm – Narcotics
 Anonymous
 7:30 pm – Cantorei
 rehearsal (with strings)

Fri., December 24

**4 pm – Christmas Eve
 Eucharist**
9:30 pm – Choral Prelude
**10 pm - Christmas Eve
 Eucharist (livestreamed)**
 7pm – Recovery Group

Sat., December 25

**10 am - Christmas Day
 Festival Eucharist**

Sun., December 26

**First Sunday of
 Christmas**
9 am – Holy Eucharist
11 am – Holy Eucharist
(livestreamed)

Tues., December 27

Noon – Bible Study

Wed., December 28

No Cantorei rehearsal this
 night

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.](#)

Tonight is the last Midweek Vespers until Lent.

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.

Constitution and Bylaws Review

The Mount Olive Vestry has authorized a process to review the constitution and by-laws of the congregation, with any resultant changes to be authorized at a legally called meeting of the voting members in 2022.

The following persons have been appointed to begin this process: Gretchen Campbell-Johnson, Pastor Crippen, Lora Dundek, George Ferguson, Tricia Van Ee, Marty Melang, John Bjork, and Karen Mohrlant. If you have suggested changes to the constitution/by-laws which this group could consider, please submit those in writing to any member of the committee, or email your comments to Gretchen Campbell-Johnson at president@mountolivechurch.org.

To obtain a copy of the constitution/by-laws, please call or email the church office.

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.

"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.

Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

It is my prayer that you can feel that celebration as you attend one of our Christmas Liturgies this season – the exuberance of the celebration of the birth of Jesus is one that is to “let the rivers clap their hands!” The celebration of the Christ child is one that should most certainly be celebrated, but I’m glad we choose to do so beginning on December 24th and not mid-October. Our hearts are given the best gift, and thanks be to God for the gift of a prepared heart to welcome the Savior of the Nations.

I look forward to sharing the gift of song with you this Christmas at Mount Olive and am grateful for your genuine welcome in these months of sabbatical for David.

“Shout with joy to the Lord, all you lands; lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.” Psalm 98:4-5

Merry Christmas!

- Interim Cantor Dietrich Jessen

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 #3: Join one the 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 has viewed the training videos and met with our LSS contact. They are now working to coordinate schedules and tasks.

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.**

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 Conniejmarty@gmail.com or at missions@mountolivechurch.org. Or call Connie at 651-468-1632 or Judy Hinck at 612-812-7342.

Stewardship Update

Rejoice! Rejoice! We have so much as a community of faith to rejoice in together.

Thank you for your contributions and joyful participation in our shared life in faith. Our faith in action has made a tremendous impact in the lives of Mount Olive and our local and global community.

Heading into the year-end we are in a positive financial position – 10% under budget with an anticipated surplus of \$29,000. Any surplus we have in our operating budget at the end of the year will be used to pay down the principal balance of our mortgage. Thank you for your generosity.

It has been a privilege to be your Director of Stewardship. I have been inspired by your generosity that has been shared so graciously. Thank you.

Together our shared life in Christ brings joy, bearing good fruits for our neighbor. Thank you for your gifts of time, talent, and treasure this year and pledged commitments into 2022.

Rejoice & go forth to be the Gospel,

Consuelo Guieterrez-Crosby
Stewardship Director

Helpful Information

For 2021 tax purposes, gifts must be postmarked and/or time stamped by December 31.

Make a one time or recurring donation via a Vanco link on our website. Click on the green DONATE NOW button at the bottom left corner on our main page.

Mail a check to the Church Office with any special instructions on how you'd like your funds applied: General Budget, Bold Step Forward, or any other special missions. We can split contributions across various ministries.

Donate stock or shares of financial assets -- we have the ability to receive transfers directly to our Thrivent Brokerage Account. Please email treasurer@mountolivechurch.org and we can communicate the instructions to you or your financial advisor.

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 Dahl, sister of Carla Manuel; Dani Olson, Harper Linguist, Steve Camper, relatives and friend of Julie Manuel; Jan McCuen, mother of Matt McCuen; Brenda Frankman, friend of Rachel Meuret; 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 Meshbeshier Hassler, Katelyn Bowden, Cindy Williams, father and friends of Robin Rayfield; Leila Jeffers, mother of Lynn and Lisa Ruff; Miranda Alvis, 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.

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

At the death of: Annette Olson, Teresa Rothausen's son-in-law's mother.

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.

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
Choral Prelude begins at 9:30 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!

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