

The Olive Branch

January 4, 2024

Accent on Worship

Vicar Mollie Hamre

Sunday Readings

January 8, 2023
Baptism of Our Lord

Isaiah 42:1-9
Psalm 29
Acts 10:34-43
Matthew 3:13-17

January 15, 2023
2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 49:1-7
Psalm 40:1-11
1 Corinthians 1:1-9
John 1:29-42

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

"That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed." - Acts 10:37-38

What does it mean to witness God's work and what difference does it make for us?

The reading from Acts asks this as Peter speaks to Cornelius and his household. Peter tells us that all were witnesses to the death of Jesus, God with us, but few saw Jesus when he rose from the dead.

Those that did, were called to witness and testify to what they saw. To share the good news and to be Christ to others in order that they may witness God's work through one another.

Peter reminds us that we are included in those witnesses. Which means we are also left with the question: where does God appear and why is that worth proclaiming to the world? It is a heavy question. One that has been passed down for generations, that sometimes leaves us with more questions than answers. It asks us to look for where God appears in the world. It asks us to trust that God continues to work in the world. And it asks that we do it together, as the Holy Spirit works through us.

As we enter into the New Year, consider what you are witnessing—what are the ways that God is working through us to do good and bring healing? As well as the ways that God works through those we would least expect, bringing healing and hope as we enter into the season of Epiphany.



Mount Olive Music & Fine Arts presents a recital by Organist Katelyn Emerson

This Sunday, January 8, 2023 – 4:00 p.m.

Organist, lecturer, and pedagogue Katelyn Emerson, hailed as “one of the world’s most promising organists” (*Listvinafélag Hallgrímskirkju, Iceland*), is internationally renowned for performances throughout North America, Europe, and Asia that are “thrilling from beginning to end” and that showcase repertoire from the 14th – 21st centuries with “impressive technical facility and musicianship” (*Cleveland Classical*).

Prizewinner of competitions on three continents, Katelyn garners acclaim from audiences ranging from those new to classical music to organ aficionados for her “beautifully designed program[s]” (*Orgue Canada*), “refreshingly original and interesting” program notes (*The Diapason*), and “careful ear and sense of musicality that puts her at the top of recitalists performing today” (*Journal of American Organbuilding*).



The Epiphany of Our Lord

This Friday, January 6
Holy Eucharist at 7:00 p.m.

All are welcome.

Save the Date--Taste of Afghanistan

On **Sunday, February 12**, you will have a chance to meet the Afghan family that we have been hosting and learn more about Afghanistan as well as party well with these new friends who will share their Afghan food and music. During the education hour you will hear directly from family members as well as from the Afghan Cultural Society of Minnesota. Anita is sharing her Afghan menu and recipes, and after the second liturgy we will all taste what both you and she have cooked up. The family is very excited to share this day with you, and it will be exactly one year since we started this journey together. Join in the fun!



The Olive Branch

Calendar

Wednesday, January 4

10:00 am Staff meeting
No Children's Choir until Jan. 18

7:30 pm Cantorei rehearsal

Thursday, January 5

7:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

Friday, January 6 - Epiphany of Our Lord

7:00 pm *Epiphany Eucharist*

7:00 pm Recovery group

Sunday, January 8 - Baptism of Our Lord

8:00 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee and conversation

9:30 am Education for all ages

10:45 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee and conversation

Monday, January 9

7:00 pm Vestry meeting

Tuesday, January 10

Noon Bible Study

Heartfelt Thanks from Your Church Staff

Many thanks to the people of Mount Olive for the generous Christmas gifts we received, and for all your kindness and support throughout the year! We are deeply grateful for you in our lives.

Blessings and peace to you all in this new year in God's care!

- The staff of Mount Olive:

Jim Bargmann, David Cherwien, Joseph Crippen, Mollie Hamre, Jose Morocho, and Cha Posz

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](#).

Book Discussion

For its January 14 meeting, they will read, *Harlem Shuffle*, by Colson Whitehead. On February 11 they will discuss *Humboldt's Gift* by Saul Bellow, and for March 11, they will read *These Precious Days*, by Ann Patchett.

The Book Discussion group meets on the second Saturday of each month at 10 am at church. All readers are welcome!

Thank You--We Failed— But We Will Try Again

Thanks to the many of you who called senators in support of the Afghan Adjustment Act. As you may know, the Act did not get attached to the final congressional action of 2022. But we will not, we must not, give up. Watch for information about the next actions to take when the new Congress meets. Time is of the essence in getting this bill passed.



Mount Olive Foundation Update

Earlier this year, I stepped down as President of Mount Olive Lutheran Church Foundation after 25 years of service. In 1996-97 I, with the help of several board members, implemented a new planned giving program modeled after several colleges and universities.

I thought it would be helpful to share the results of the Foundation’s efforts over the past 25 years. I believe they are truly remarkable, especially considering that Mount Olive is an urban church with approximately 450 member households.

	<u>1998</u>	<u>2022</u>
Current Endowment	\$ 110,000	\$2,066,607
Annual Gift to the Congregation	\$ 6,500	\$ 61,124
Number of Named Endowment Funds	0	10 (7 current, 3 future)
Number of Known Expectancies (Living donor estate provisions)	0	39
Value of Donor-Disclosed Provisions	0 (0 Provisions)	\$3,723,000 (17 Provisions)
Value of Undisclosed Provisions	\$0 (0 Provisions)	\$ Unknown (22 Provisions)
<p>Assessment: Currently, Mount Olive’s potential endowment is \$5,789,607 plus the unknown value of 22 provisions. Assuming a 4.5% endowment payout, the potential annual gift to the congregation is \$260,532, not including the unknown provision values.</p>		

Indeed, God has richly blessed the Mount Olive Foundation, helping us to provide a very solid financial future for our church. Do we still need additional current and estate gifts? Absolutely! As this endowment grows, it allows us to provide greater service to the needs of the church and our surrounding neighborhood. Also keep in mind that the Foundation’s gifts go to needs over and above the church’s annual budget.

When you consider potential charitable beneficiaries for your estate, we hope you will include Mount Olive Lutheran Church Foundation. See any one of our board members with your questions and hopes:

Keith Bartz (Former President)
 Sue Browender
 Kat Campbell Johnson (President)
 Mark Farnan (Vice President)

George Ferguson
 Carol Peterson
 Paul Sundquist (Treasurer)
 Kathy Thurston (Secretary)



The Olive Branch

Adult Education: *Upcoming Sunday Adult Forums* *(9:30 am in the Chapel Lounge)*

January 8: *“The Impact of Grief and Loss”* - The experience of grief and loss affects us in a comprehensive manner. Our bodies, minds, and spirits are all changed by the experience. And not all losses are as obvious as others. Thomas Ellis, a Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist at Crocus Hill Counseling Center in St. Paul will be our presenter. He is the author of *This Thing Called Grief* and has presented to many area congregations on the topic of grief and loss.

January 15 & 22: *“Daily Dying and Rising”* - The Adult Forums on January 15 and 22 will be led by our Sabbatical Pastor, Paul Hoffman. Beginning with Romans 6 and working through Luther’s understanding of what it means to be “born again,” Paul will lead the conversation about how each day is an opportunity for both baptismal formation and baptismal living for Jesus’ disciples in the world. For 18 years, Pastor Hoffman led the ministry of the Adult Catechumenate at Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church in Seattle. During that time, the congregation reached into the community in an intentional way to offer the gift of baptism to those in Seattle who had never had the opportunity to become a part of the body of Christ. Paul’s book, *Faith Forming Faith*, is a great primer to this ministry, and a wonderful way to learn to know him a bit better as he comes to lead among us.

An Advocacy Celebration

“This past July, in anticipation of the Mayor putting forth a city budget proposal, over 180 members from 24 collaborating faith communities gathered to speak with one voice about the need for deeply affordable housing in Minneapolis” at an event planned by Mount Olive partner Beacon Interfaith Housing. Several Mount Olive members attended this event and Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry Jim Bargmann was one of the speakers, representing both Mount Olive and another of our partner organizations, Align Mpls.

At that gathering, participants were encouraged to contact Mayor Frey and members of the City Council regarding the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. "Several Beacon leaders and staff later met with the Mayor, reiterating this request."

Now, we celebrate that the Mayor’s proposed budget included an increase 3 million dollars to this fund and the City Council has approved that increase. This is a big win for affordable housing in Minneapolis and a great example of what grassroots advocacy can accomplish! For more on this, please read the complete Beacon Interfaith article here: <https://www.beaconinterfaith.org/blog/beacon-news/ahtf-increase/>



Join Align Minneapolis for Our January Lunch & Learn

Align Minneapolis is a dynamic organization comprised of 17 congregations working together to end homelessness. Align hosts regular educational events to share how we can all learn and advocate to end homelessness in our community, including something called Lunch & Learn. Several from the Mount Olive Community were able to attend this event when we hosted in November. This next Lunch and Learn will be hosted by our sister congregation, Central Lutheran, on Wednesday, January 11, 1:00-2:30 pm.

Anyone interested in issues related to housing and homelessness prevention are invited to attend with Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry Jim Bargmann. Attendees will have the opportunity to meet with David Hewitt, Director of Housing Stability at Hennepin County.

Please bring your own lunch.

To register, email Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry Jim Bargmann at neighborhood@mountolivechurch.org.

Why We Partner With MNIPL

Over the years many have asked why we partner with a "power and light" organization, whether that is the opposite of what we should be doing to fight for climate justice. And, as we have explained, Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light is an organization of faith communities working to be the "power and light" in working for climate justice. This recent email from MNIPL might help you understand what they do and how they help us to help.

Some of what we at MNIPL are celebrating that you have helped make happen:

- We've made subject experts available through our webinars, such as the former chair of the Coalition of Legislators for Energy Action Now under President Obama, Jeremy Kalin, on the Inflation Reduction Act and University of MN's Director of Planetary Health, Dr. Terri Potter, on climate anxiety.
- We convinced Rep. Ilhan Omar to lead on a petition to the U.S. State Department on a U.N. agreement for wealthy nations to assist poor nations in dealing with the loss and damage of climate change, and we sent one of our own staff to COP27 in Cairo to track the proceedings.
- We've supported dozens of faith communities and homeowners to explore solar including 15 installed church systems and raising funds to completely pay for three low-income households to get solar systems.
- We support racial reconciliation, such as our Indigenous-led northland tour on which 50 participants learned about food sovereignty, northland economies, rights-of-nature litigation, and other indigenous-led efforts for climate justice. For 2023 we are developing both a reparations campaign and a zero-waste campaign that aims to eliminate incinerators and the air pollution they create.
- Our staff have given dozens of presentations in faith communities around the state, and we are growing our networks in St. Peter, Cook County, St. Cloud, and the Arrowhead.

Mount Olive Lutheran Church

3045 Chicago Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55407

*A congregation of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

Sunday Eucharists: 8 & 10:45 am

Contact Us

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On the Web: mountolivechurch.org

Staff

Interim Pastor – *Paul Hoffman*

Cantor – *David Cherwien*

Vicar – *Mollie Hamre*

Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry –
Jim Bargmann

Administrative Assistant – *Cha Posz*

Sexton – *Jose Morocho*

*Mount Olive is a Reconciling in Christ
congregation.*

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