

# The Olive Branch

January 25, 2024

## Accent on Worship *Interim Pastor Paul Hoffman*

### *An Embarrassment of Riches*

Throughout the Christmas season, the sweeping and beautiful words of the prologue to John's Gospel washed over us. Among those words are this lovely reminder from verse 16: And from God's fullness we have all received, grace on top of grace.

In these weeks following Epiphany, the lectionary reveals to us some of that fullness, one grace piled atop another. This Sunday, the gifts will fall upon us like manna from heaven. Here's a preview...

"...do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with your God"  
Micah 6:8

"...the message about the cross is foolishness"  
1 Corinthians 1:18

"...God's weakness is stronger than human strength."  
1 Corinthians 1:24

And as if that weren't already enough grace served up, from there we plunge into the beginning of Jesus' teaching ministry with the opening of the Sermon on the Mount, The Beatitudes.  
Matthew 5:1-12

One of the hazards of such beautiful and sweeping passages of Scripture is that they are just that - beautiful, sweeping, and familiar. Familiar words can make it difficult for us to stop, look, and listen. How do words spoken by an ancient prophet, a first-century evangelist, or our Lord himself speak to us?

*continued on page 2*

### Sunday Readings

**January 29, 2023**

*4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany*

Micah 6:1-8

Psalm 15

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Matthew 5:1-12

**February 5, 2023**

*5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany*

Isaiah 58:1-9a [9b-12]

Psalm 112:1-9

1 Corinthians 2:1-12

[13-16]

Matthew 5:13-20

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



## Additional Live Streamers Needed

We are in need of a couple more volunteers to run the live stream during worship. You'll need to be comfortable using technology, but most importantly, follow along with the liturgy and switch cameras in anticipation of what's happening next. It is important work, giving those who can not be with us in person the ability to join us in worship.

What you'll do as a live streamer: Get situated at the computer in the South Gallery and start the live stream a minute or two before the prelude begins. Follow along with the liturgy, and when

we come to a transition point (e.g. a reader walks to the lectern, or a hymn is about to begin), you press a couple buttons to switch to the correct camera, move camera positions, and/or display overlay slides with music on them.

Training sessions & written directions are available. And an experienced streamer will sit by you and assist you for your first liturgies. With the addition of a couple more volunteers, each of us will be scheduled once per month.

### How to get involved:

- Contact Dan at [worship@mountolivechurch.org](mailto:worship@mountolivechurch.org) or 612-600-6982 with any questions and if you're interested.
- Visit with any current streamer after liturgy to see how it all works in the South Gallery.

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## Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

What are the riches of God's ever-accumulating grace for followers of Jesus like you and me in these cherished yet familiar words?

One of the things that strikes me about each of these texts is just how filled they are with paradoxes. Micah contrasts empty sacrifice to the fullness of a humble walk with God. Paul challenges us to grapple with God's wisdom pitted against that of the world. And Jesus wastes no time in introducing us to his ministry of unexpected reversals. He teaches of a new creation in which the meek, the merciful, and the pure in heart reap endless blessing.

Something here is calling us to die to familiarity so that Jesus can raise us up to new insights and strength for a life in service to the world. I'm looking forward to liturgy with you on Sunday in which God will once again reveal to us the endless well of grace on top of grace.

- Interim Pastor Paul E. Hoffman



# The Olive Branch

## Calendar

### Wednesday, January 25

- 10:00 am Staff meeting
- 5:30 pm Children's Choir supper
- 6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsal
- 7:00 pm Cantorei rehearsal

### Thursday, January 26

- 7:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

### Friday, January 27

- 10:00 am Funeral Visitation
- 11:00 am** *Funeral Eucharist: Jim Harbaugh*
- 7:00 pm Recovery group

### Sunday, January 29 - 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany

- 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
- 12:30 pm Y1 Confirmation

### Monday, January 30

- 5:30 pm Family Music Time (online)

### Tuesday, January 31

- Noon Bible Study

## Tuesday Noon Bible Study Link

The Tuesday Noon Bible Study is meeting in person, in the **East Assembly Room** 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](#).

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## Book Discussion

For its February 11 meeting, the group 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!

## The Presentation of Our Lord

Thursday, February 2

Holy Eucharist at 7:00 p.m.

All are welcome.

## Contact Information for Interim Pastor Paul Hoffman

email: [paulhoffman56@gmail.com](mailto:paulhoffman56@gmail.com)

Cell: 206.972.9995



## EcoFaith Summit 2023

The EcoFaith Network of the Minneapolis Area Synod Leadership Team is hosting the MAS EcoFaith Summit 2023 on **February 4<sup>th</sup> from 10am to 2pm at Diamond Lake Lutheran Church in Minneapolis.**

The event will bring together lay people, clergy, community partners, and everyone in between from across the synod to learn from one another

about the incredible work already happening in our communities and future opportunities to further efforts of pushing back against the climate crisis. Plus, free lunch! The agenda will include a morning of great speakers from community organizations like Minnesota InterFaith Power & Light, Community Power, Cooperative Energy Futures, and more, lunch, social time, and opportunities to learn how you and your congregational community can take effective climate action. Here's the [link to register](#).



This event is for anyone interested in environmental action, from those who have never been involved before to folks who have made this work their life's passion. Join other Mount Olive members in attending this event.

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## Taste of Afghanistan: March 12

Please UPDATE your calendars!

We have moved our Taste of Afghanistan one month to March 12 to accommodate some unexpected needs of the Mohammadi family.

**On Sunday, March 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

## Education Themes for This Week

**This coming week, we will wonder:**

**Circle One:** Parable of the Good Samaritan  
**Circle Two:** Parable of the Great Pearl

*I wonder what conversations you will have at home!*

Please note that we hold Godly Play every Sunday at 9:30am!

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

**January 29:** “*Christian Nationalism: What is it and Why Now?*,” presented by David Engen. Christian Nationalism is front and center in the political turmoil which seems to define our national conversation today. David Engen will present the ideologies at the center of this political movement and how it runs counter to what defines the Christian faith. We will look at it considering scripture, Luther, and contemporary writers – those supporting it and those in opposition.

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### **January Neighborhood Ministries Partner of the Month:** *Our Saviour’s Community Services*

Our Saviour’s Community Services, a non-profit founded by our sister congregation, operates a shelter for adults experiencing homelessness, transitional housing for women who have experienced domestic abuse, and permanent supportive housing for men and women who live with a mental illness, physical disability, and/or substance use disorders. In addition, Mount Olive volunteers provide meals at the Our Saviour’s shelter once a month.

Mount Olive has chosen to support each of our Partners of the Month through a yearly contribution from our budget, and often, like our partner this month, we also volunteer in support of their work. On top of those financial and labor contributions, we encourage any member who wishes to donate 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.

For more information about Our Saviour’s work, please visit their website at <https://oscs-mn.org>. For more information about the teams from Mount Olive serving meals at the shelter, contact Elaine Halbardier at [ech914@comcast.net](mailto:ech914@comcast.net).



## Congregational Life Committee Seeks Volunteers

**TREATS FOR COFFEE HOUR:** Thanks to those who have signed up to provide treats for Sunday Morning Coffee hour. There are still lots of dates and times available. Remember, you don't have to make coffee or do the dishes. Simply provide the treats (store-bought are fine) and help serve them. Mentoring is provided upon request if you've not done this before.

**LENT IS COMING SOON: Lenten Wednesday noon and evening soup suppers.** Sign up to provide soup and bread for 15-20 people, either after Wednesday noon worship, or at 6 p.m. before Evening Prayer. Sign-up coming soon in the coffee serving area. Starts March 1.

**DRIVERS NEEDED:** Are you willing to provide an occasional ride to church or other events for someone who is no longer driving or doesn't like to drive in winter or in the evening? Let the office know, or contact Lora Dundek at [lhdundek@usfamily.net](mailto:lhdundek@usfamily.net)

**CALLING ALL SNOWBIRDS (or anyone else, for that matter!):** We have several folks who are pretty much confined to home who would appreciate a card or letter on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. Let Lora know if you're willing to do that ([lhdundek@usfamily.net](mailto:lhdundek@usfamily.net)). It's a great activity for those who are away for the winter but would still like to stay connected to Mount Olive members.

**SAVE THE DATE! Sunday, May 21 at 2:00 p.m:** A guided tour of Native Dakota sacred sites, led by Rev. Jim Bear Jacobs of the Minnesota Council of Churches. More info to come. No charge, but a free will offering would be appreciated. Initial funding provided by the Mount Olive Foundation.

## 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**

Phone: 612-827-5919

On the Web: [mountolivechurch.org](http://mountolivechurch.org)

#### **Staff**

Interim Pastor – *Paul E. 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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