



# The Olive Branch

November 15, 2023

## Sunday Readings

**November 19, 2023**

*25<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost*

*Lectionary 33 A*

Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18

Psalm 90:1-12

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Matthew 25:14-30

**November 26, 2023**

*Reign of Christ, year A*

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

Psalm 95:1-7a

Ephesians 1:15-23

Matthew 25:31-46

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

## Accent on Worship

*Vicar Lauren Mildahl*

We will hear this week a rare reading from the prophet Zephaniah, who offers a similarly rare directive: “Be *silent* before God!” (1:7). It isn’t often that the Biblical writers encourage us to be silent. More often, in the Psalms especially, we are encouraged to “Sing!” and to “Shout!” Even Zephaniah, just a few chapters later, will say instead: “Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!” (3:14).

But this week, we are invited into silence.

In this case, it is a fearful, ashamed silence in the face of the punishment that Zephaniah warns that God has in store. But that isn’t the only way to sit silently before God. We can also sit with God in friendly, comfortable silence. Or in reverent, obedient silence. Or in expectant, eager silence. Or in calm, peaceful silence. Silence is nuanced, multifaceted, and strangely intimate.

Silence, as a spiritual practice, fascinates me, although I am not very good at it. One of the first things I do in the morning is push play on a podcast to listen to as I brush my teeth. There’s always something playing while I drive, when I go for walks, when I do the dishes. I even fall asleep with noise! I don’t leave very much room in my life for silence.

But I wonder if I’d be better off if I did. Christian communities throughout time have developed many different spiritual practices of silence. Many monastic communities observe “The Great Silence” between evening and morning prayers. Quaker communities engage in worship that is centered in silence, so that the Friends might be more receptive to divine revelation. Even the ELW directs that we observe “silence for reflection” following

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

the sermon at every Eucharist. Again and again Christians have searched for God, and found God, in silence.

Silence is opportunity. An opportunity to reflect, to search our hearts. An opportunity to listen, to hear God's still, small voice. Yet so often we squander that opportunity. Are we afraid of the hurts or hates we will discover lurking in our hearts? Or are afraid of what we might hear the Spirit saying something hard or harsh? We might hear those things in silence, but what messages of love and joy and peace are we missing when we drown out God's voice with noise? I suppose we'll have to follow Zephaniah's advice and brave the silence to find out.

- Vicar Lauren Mildahl

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## Peace of Mind

In working with our Afghan friends, we are often reminded of things we take for granted, like peace of mind that comes from knowing we are safe and have a home. Things that they think about all the time and cannot take for granted.

- When they first came to our community, LSS applied for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for the father, but we have since learned that this does not protect the mother and the children born in Afghanistan from being sent back. So they worry.
- When their immigrant parole status was about to expire in July and they were in danger of being sent back to Afghanistan and persecution, the Biden administration extended their parole status for two years, but again this is temporary. So they worry.
- When our congress failed (again) to pass the Afghan Adjustment Act, and the Afghan Ally Protection Act, the "easier" pathway to a more permanent legal immigration status and citizenship was blocked. So they worry.

Working with an Afghan immigration attorney, himself an immigrant, we have learned that a petition for asylum, once granted, would protect the whole family's immigration status and move them closer to being eligible for a green card and citizenship and remove much of the worry associated with their current, temporary status. But it is costly for them to do this since LSS is no longer able to help them.

The law firm's reduced rate to immigrants for this application is \$5,000, \$1,500 of which would be required to retain their services and begin the application process. The family can make payments each month until the remainder is paid off. Your Global Missions Committee feels this only transfers the worry and does not really add peace of mind. So we would like to open this opportunity to the generous hearts of Mount Olive to help provide funding support for the asylum process and the peace of mind it would bring. Any additional funds received would be used for dental work (a root canal and crown) required for the father.

Gifts, as you are moved and able, should be clearly designated for "Afghan resettlement" on the memo line. Thank you doesn't begin to convey the gratitude they already feel for our community's support.

- The Mount Olive Global Ministry Committee

## Calendar

### Wednesday, November 15

10:00 am Staff meeting  
5:30 pm Children's Choirs supper  
6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsals  
7:00 pm Y2 Confirmation  
7:00 pm Cantorei rehearsal

### Thursday, November 16

6:00 pm Bible Study  
7:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

### Friday, November 17

7:00 pm Recovery Group

### Saturday, November 18

9:00 am Chancel Cleaning  
Noon Foundation Board meeting

### Sunday, November 19 - 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, Lect. 33 A

8:00 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee & conversation  
9:30 am Education for all ages (Godly Play, Adult Forum)  
10:45 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee & conversation

### Monday, November 20

5:30 pm Family Music Time (online)  
7:00 pm Worship Committee meeting  
7:00 pm Monday Night WAVE (N.A. group)

### Tuesday, November 21

Noon Bible Study

### Wednesday, November 22

10:00 am Staff meeting

**No Choirs or Confirmation this evening.**

### Thursday, November 23 - Thanksgiving Day

*Church offices closed*

10:00 a.m. *Thanksgiving Day Eucharist*

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## Thanksgiving Day Eucharist Thursday, November 23 10:00 a.m.

*All are welcome.*

The offering received at the Thanksgiving Eucharist will be donated the Community Emergency Services and Sabathani food shelves.

## 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 their December 9 meeting, the group will read *Pachinko*, by Min Jin Lee, and for January 13, they will read *Lost Colony: The Hennessee Island Murders*, by Steve Berg.

The group has been using Zoom to provide remote access to the sessions. If you would like to participate in the group, you can either attend the monthly sessions which meet at the church in person or join remotely via Zoom. To join from your computer, tablet, or smart phone, [click here](#).

## Attention Sunday Servants!

The Mount Olive Servant Schedule for 1st Quarter 2024 (Jan-March) will be published at the beginning of December. Please send any updates regarding scheduling preferences or conflicts to me by Friday, November 17.

For example, if you prefer the early or late services, or like to serve for certain holidays or other special services, please let me know.

- Greg Murphy:  
[gregmurphy@gmail.com](mailto:gregmurphy@gmail.com)

## Altar Guild Chancel Cleaning

The Altar Guild is hosting a chancel-cleaning event this Saturday, November 18, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

Please join the crew – for an hour, or for the morning. The more hands, the faster we'll finish!

Come help prepare our worship space for Advent and Christmas.

Questions? Contact Beth Gaede:  
[bethgaede@comcast.com](mailto:bethgaede@comcast.com) .

## Conspiracy vs. The Bible: Monday/Thursday Bible Study Continues

This month, Vicar Mildahl is leading a six-session Bible Study looking closely at common elements of modern American conspiracy theories that are drawn from a Christian worldview, such as the Devil, the end times, Jewish people, and Christian nationalism. We'll be comparing the conspiracy theory versions of these ideas with what the Bible actually says and discussing how faithful believers ought to respond and speak the truth in love.

Two identical sessions are offered each week: Mondays at noon (note the change, not Fridays) and Thursdays at 6pm. You are welcome to join in person or via Zoom. Monday participants, feel free to bring your lunch. Thursday nights will include a light supper. Contact [vicar@mountolivechurch.org](mailto:vicar@mountolivechurch.org) if you have any questions!

[Click here](#) to join the Zoom meeting for either the Monday or Thursday sessions.

## Music & Fine Arts Advent Procession *Sunday, December 3, 4:00 pm*

All are invited to this annual service of lessons and carols for Advent.

## Welcome, New Members!

On Sunday, November 12, Mount Olive congregation welcomed into membership the following persons:

Robert Farlee, Andy Heintz, and Elizabeth Spang & Walter Still.

Welcome to these newest members of Mount Olive!



## Summary of the Monthly Mount Olive Vestry\* Meeting – Oct. 9, 2023

**This summary** is part of a 6-month trial of putting monthly Vestry meeting summaries in *The Olive Branch*, so members of the congregation can be informed about what the Vestry is discussing and working on.

### In Progress Business

- We discussed the September 16 Vestry Retreat, and some action plans that President, Chandler Molbert will formalize.
- The Vestry approved Jim Bargmann's proposal that we add Mount Olive's name to the list of organizations supporting the "Our Future Starts at Home." This coalition of organizations supports a constitutional amendment dedicating a consistent funding stream for affordable housing.

### New Business

- The Columbarium Committee is working on starting Phase 2 of the Columbarium.
- The Vestry approved the proposed budget for 2024, which is slightly less than last year's budget.
- We planned for the Congregational meeting which took place on October 29.

### Highlights from Staff and Committee Reports

- Staff reports
  - Vicar – appreciates the many opportunities to get to know members of the congregation
  - Cantor
    - Music and Fine Arts hosted Finish Folk Music by artist Ruth McKenzie and friends, October 15.
    - The organ will have a **complete** tuning of all its pipes this fall, which hasn't been done for several years.
- Evangelism – new members will be received on November 12.
- Property – there was hail damage to the roof and repair is being looked into
- Worship
  - renovation to the north sacristy is in process
  - a Spanish version of our general liturgy will be available during worship
  - possibility of visual art with liturgies
- Youth and Family – 1<sup>st</sup> Family Movie night is coming up, November 12, at 2:00.

*\*What is the Vestry?*

*The governing council of the congregation, elected by members to manage its mission and life.*

## November Neighborhood Ministry Partner of the Month

### *Restorative Justice Community Action*

Restorative Justice Community Action (RJCA) provides a community-based alternative to criminal prosecution with the mission of fostering individual growth while strengthening communities through restorative justice practices. With a restorative and race equity lens, RJCA leverages the voice of community to transform the criminal legal system, public safety, and eliminate racial disparities. The indigenous roots of restorative justice focus on transformation of people, relationships, and community. In honoring these roots, RJCA humanizes conflict and supports community in finding shared solutions.

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.

For more information about Restorative Justice Community Action, please visit their website at [www.rjca-inc.org](http://www.rjca-inc.org) or contact Cynthia Prosek, RJCA Executive Director and Mount Olive Member.

## Adult Forums for November

**November 19:** “Medieval Woman Mystics,” presented by Vicar Lauren Mildahl.

A quick introduction of mysticism and a tour of Vicar Mildahl's favorite medieval mystics (Hildegard of Bingen, Mechthild of Magdeburg, Julian of Norwich, Catherine of Siena, and Teresa of Avila) with some brief biographies and samples of their words or writings.

**November 26:** “My favorite parts of the Bible that aren't in the Lectionary,” presented by Vicar Lauren Mildahl

Starting with a quick introduction to the Revised Common Lectionary and then presenting a top ten list (if she has that many!) of parts of the Bible that have been especially meaningful or important to her, but which we don't ever hear on a Sunday morning in the Revised Common Lectionary.

## Family Movie Event

Eight kids and four adults enjoyed watching *Book of Life* and eating freshly made popcorn at last Sunday's afternoon family movie. Thanks to Erica, Kane, and Jasmine Johnson for putting in the work to make this happen!



## Mount Olive Lutheran Church

3045 Chicago Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55407

*A congregation of the Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in America*

### **Sunday Eucharists:**

**8:00 & 10:45 am**

### **Contact Us**

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Web: [www.mountolivechurch.org](http://www.mountolivechurch.org)

### **Staff**

Pastor – *Joseph Crippen*

Cantor – *David Cherwien*

Vicar – *Lauren Mildahl*

Coordinator of Neighborhood Outreach  
and Ministry – *Jim Bargmann*

Administrative Assistant – *Cha Posz*

*Mount Olive is a Reconciling in Christ  
congregation.*

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