



The Olive Branch

November 5, 2025

Accent on Worship

Jim Bargmann

This week, our chosen readings give us an interesting series of topics ripe for theological and scholarly examination from the rebellion and “lawless one” in Thessalonians to the Sadducees beliefs about the resurrection. None of these topics seemed appropriate for an Accent on Worship in terms of topic or the length to do them justice. But I found myself gravitating toward the Psalm for this week. The implied context seemed applicable to our own times and

some interesting phrases caught my attention, so a bit of a devotional commentary on the first nine verses of Psalm 17, if you will.

Hear a just cause, O Lord; attend to my cry; give ear to my prayer from lips free of deceit. From you let my vindication come; let your eyes see the right.

This Psalm, like many, is attributed to David. While we do not know with certainty when these words were first prayed and recorded, David starts with an inward look and seems to want to establish the integrity of his prayer. Later in this Psalm, it seems as though David is troubled by people perceived as enemies wanting to do him harm and offering a plea to God for rescue. This may explain the nature of these opening words.

If you try my heart, if you visit me by night, if you test me, you will find no wickedness in me; my mouth does not transgress.

These words seem to suggest at least one if not more sleepless nights spent with some kind of inward conflict over whatever is going on in David’s life and an invitation, almost a plea, to God to “please find no wickedness in me.” The Hebrew verb used in the phrase translated “my mouth does not transgress” is interesting - it means to muzzle - like an animal. David is essentially saying he has blocked his mouth from being able to say things that are wrong.

As for what others do, by the word of your lips I have avoided the ways of the violent. My steps have held fast to your paths; my feet have not slipped.

The poetry here creates an interesting phrase. It seems that David is saying, “others act and speak violently, in fact violence has become their identity - but that is not Your way - your words speak peace Your words

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Sunday Readings

November 9, 2025

22nd Sunday after

Pentecost, Lect. 32, year C

Job 19:23-27a

Psalm 17:1-9

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17

Luke 20:27-38

November 16, 2025

23rd Sunday after

Pentecost, Lect. 33, year C

Malachi 4:1-2a

Psalm 98

2 Thessalonians 3:6-13

Luke 21:5-19

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

Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

are what I follow." How applicable to our own time and space, dear people who strive for peace in a world that seems anything but peace-filled!

I call upon you, for you will answer me, O God; incline your ear to me; hear my words.

These next few phrases mark the middle of the Psalm - our lectionary cuts off the final six verses - but as such, they mark a turning point in the Psalm - a very common thing in Hebrew poetry. The voice shifts from David establishing himself as worthy of offering this prayer (of course he is - not because of who he is but because of who God is!) to what David is asking of God. He begins by saying, "please listen to me!"

Wondrously show your steadfast love, O savior of those who seek refuge from their adversaries at your right hand. Guard me as the apple of the eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings, from the wicked who despoil me, my deadly enemies who surround me.

David proclaims who God is from the evidence of God's own past action on behalf of God's people - You have been the savior of those who seek refuge - and asks God to demonstrate God's great and lasting love by doing just that - becoming David's own refuge in the face of those who speak and act violently. These phrases are reminiscent of the songs of praise following God's actions in bringing God's people out of slavery in Egypt - perhaps David's own plea for an exodus from his own situation. Again, how much a prayer for our time!

And then, this portion of the Psalm closes with a beautiful and interesting pair of metaphors. First, a curious phrase that seems to have changed meaning over time. We, perhaps, are most familiar with the English use of the phrase "the apple of one's eye" which is quite literal - the best apple of the bunch, the beauty, free of blemishes, and delicious looking. But the phrase in Hebrew actually referred to the pupil of the eye as the "apple." When used in this cultural context, it meant the focus of someone's attention, the center, the most important thing, worthy of love and care.

And then, David asks to be protected under the shadow of God's own wings as a parent bird protects their vulnerable young.

In a time when, like David, we find ourselves living in a world that is growing more and more violent in words and actions, I find this to be a comforting image and a Psalm we can join in praying.

- Jim Bargmann

Mount Olive Family Music Meets In-person This Sunday

Mount Olive Family Music, our music and faith experience for children from birth through Kindergarten with a caregiver, usually meets on Mondays over Zoom. We sing, pray, dance, and play from the comforts of home, no need to get bundled up and in a car seat for this musical experience. The caregiver-child bond grows through musical connection in a faithful context, with the hope that music and prayers shared will become part of home life.

This Sunday, November 9 from 9:45-10:30, Family Music participants ages birth-35 months and children not yet in Godly Play are welcome to an **in-person session** in the Godly Play 3 room on the lower level. We will enjoy familiar songs and activities with the novelty of friends and teacher Mari in person! Children and families new to Mount Olive Family Music are very welcome to join us. We will happily sing, "God loves you!" with you and to you.

The Olive Branch

Calendar

Wednesday, November 5

- 10:00 am Staff meeting
5:30 pm Children's Choir Supper
6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsals
7:00 pm Cantorei rehearsal
7:00 pm Y3 Confirmation

Thursday, November 6

- 9:30 am Morning Prayer
7:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

Friday, November 7

- 7:00 pm Recovery Group

Saturday, November 8

- 10:00 am Book Discussion group

Sunday, November 9 – 22nd Sunday after Pentecost

- 8:00 am Holy Eucharist, followed by coffee and conversation
9:30 am Godly Play / Adult Forum
No Youth Discussion this day
9:30 am Family Music LIVE!
10:45 am Holy Eucharist, followed by coffee and conversation

Monday, November 10

- 5:30 pm Family Music Time (online only)
7:00 pm Vestry meeting
7:00 pm Monday Night WAVE (N.A.)

Tuesday, November 11

- Noon Bible Study

Hope for Home

An Open House Fundraiser for Align Minneapolis
Thursday, November 20, 4:00 to 7:00 pm
Plymouth Congregational Church, 1900 Nicollet Avenue, Minneapolis

Learn more about how Align Minneapolis serves our community while enjoying the company of like-minded individuals wanting to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors.

Appetizers, small dessert items, and other refreshments will be served.

No registration required; come and go as you please, stay as long as you are able.

Tuesday Noon Bible Study Link

The Tuesday Noon Bible Study meets weekly in person in the East Assembly Room. For those who are unable to come in person, the Bible Study is held 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 the November meeting, the selection is *The Mighty Red* by Minnesota's own Louise Erdrich. On December 13 the group will consider Barbara Kingsolver's latest, *Demon Copperhead*. This will be the fifth Kingsolver book the group has read. On January 10, the group will consider an author new to the group, Niall Williams, as they read *Time of the Child*.

Everyone is invited to join whenever you are able, at 10 a.m. in the Library, usually on the second Saturday of each month. 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](#).

Upcoming Adult Forums

- Nov. 2 & 9** "Women and Divine Calling in Hebrew Scriptures," a 2-part series presented by Earl Schwartz. In this series we explore biblical texts in which a woman is referred to as a prophet, a wise woman, and/or a judge-chieftain. These passages suggest broader cultural horizons among ancient Israelites than is often assumed, while presenting many questions, including: Do these inspired and inspiring women represent a moral voice and vision associated primarily with women? If so, how might we understand this quality in light of other gender-related aspects of evolving Israelite culture, and our own?
- Nov. 16** "Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Minnesota," presented by Vicar Erik Nelson. Dr. Mark Granquist jokingly refers to the University of Minnesota as the largest Lutheran university in the United States. But what does Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Minnesota actually look like? Join Vicar Nelson as he shares his experiences with LCM, as well as some of the opportunities and challenges that LCM faces. Vicar Nelson previously served LCM for three years as their Saint Paul Campus Outreach Intern.

Align to Learn

Harm Reduction and the Use of Narcan

Wednesday, November 12, 12:00 to 1:30 pm

Mount Olive Lutheran Church

Mount Olive will host this event and together with volunteers from other Align congregations, we will have a chance to learn about harm reduction and the use of Narcan (sometimes also called Naloxone) in the case of suspected overdose. This has been a frequently-requested topic among the volunteers at many Align congregations, including Mount Olive.

Anyone interested in learning these vital skills is welcome to attend - regardless of whether you actively volunteer within our Neighborhood Ministry programs or not.

There is no cost for this event - it is paid for by Align Minneapolis - but donations to cover honoraria for the trainers can be accepted.

Attention Worship Assistants!

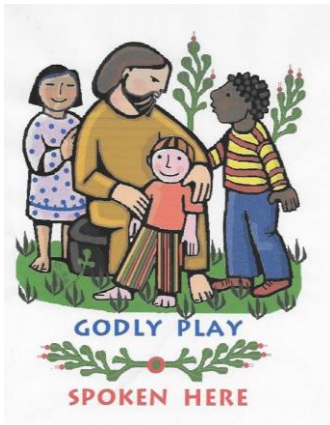
The Mount Olive Servant Schedule for **2026 Quarter 1 (January - March, + Holy Week)** will be published in December. Holy Week will be March 29-April 5.

Please send any scheduling preferences or dates you will be unavailable to me by **Friday, November 21.**

Please let me know any questions you have.

Thank you.

- Greg Murphy gregRmurphy@gmail.com



Godly Play

Next Sunday the Godly Play circles will begin their journey toward Advent and how Jesus comes to us. Circle 1 will hear about how The Prophets Show the Way, while Circle 2 will learn about a specific prophet, Isaiah.

All children ages 3-Grade 1 are welcome to Circle One, and children in grades 2-5 are welcome to Circle Two.

Disaster Relief

Hurricane Melissa



Hurricane Melissa touched down in Jamaica on Tuesday, October 28 — the first time the island nation has ever experienced a Category 5 hurricane. The devastation of this “storm of the century” has spread throughout the Caribbean, including Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

As our neighbors in Melissa’s path endure this terrible storm and its aftermath, they need all the prayers and support we can give them. Thousands of people on these islands already live in fragile homes and in informal settlements. There is an immense need for food, clean water, emergency shelter, and essential supplies.

Your Global Ministry Committee has approved a \$2000 donation from the Global Ministry undesignated offerings for the relief effort. We encourage you to pray, and if you want, give a donation to [Lutheran World Relief](https://www.lutheranworldrelief.org). If you prefer, you may give through Mount Olive by designating your gift for “Hurricane Relief.”

Neighborhood Ministry Greeter Needed

As we further refine the work of our Neighborhood Ministry Hosts, it has become apparent that we need to add a role to our team. We are looking for a person or several people who have availability to serve with us on Tuesdays and/or Thursdays between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm. A person serving in this role will answer the doorbell and register our guests when they arrive. Work with technology is important, but if you feel comfortable using an iPad or similar tablet, your skills will serve you well. Please contact Jim Bargmann, neighborhood@mountolivechurch.org if you are interested.

Shared Ministry Notes

At the semi-annual meeting of the congregation a few days ago, Pr. Crippen mentioned that most people at Mount Olive do not “pledge” or promise to share a dollar amount with the congregation each year. He’s correct. For the current year, (2025), forty-four households filled out a pledge card. That equates to about 25% of the total number of households in the congregation. Mount Olive has not mounted a vigorous pledge drive in recent years, and there is debate among religious circles about whether this practice is effective in helping a congregation meet its budget.

For some people, pledging is an important process that gives voice to their promise of support of our ministries. For others, it seems like a needless or unreasonable exercise. What do you think? If you’d like to share your thoughts about pledging, you can email shared@mountolivechurch.com, or speak to any of the Shared Ministry Committee whose names appear below. We’d like to hear your thoughts!

Lora Dundek, Paul Nixdorf, Donn McLellan, Kat Campbell Johnson, Adam Krueger, Ted Thompson (ex-officio), and Pr. Crippen

All Nations Indian Church Wopila Dinner Worship

Mount Olive is one of the churches invited to have a table or two at the All Nations Indian Church's Wopila Dinner Worship, a community fundraising event on Tuesday, November 25, from 6:00 - 8:30 pm. It's a multigenerational event, so all ages are welcome. Mount Olive will be donating money to the event. We need to know how many members are interested in attending, so we can accurately request seats for the event.

Described as a "Shared Feast of Gratitude and Reciprocity," this is the first time that All Nations Indian Church is hosting this event in their own space.

"For the Sioux people, a Wopila is a sacred way to thank you, to give back to the people and relationships who have walked beside us."

The schedule for the event is:

6:00 - 7:00 - Social hour and Church tours

7:00 - 8:30 - Wopila Dinner and Worship - including communal meal, storytelling and reflection inspired by *The Serviceberry* by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

All Nations specific goals for fundraising includes:

- Replacing their courtyard doors (safety and accessibility)
- Supporting their Free Mental Health Ministry
- Salary support for pastors and their building manager

Additionally, if you're interested, (none of this is required) before the event there's opportunities to:

- Bring Mount Olive's contribution to the meal - potatoes, white and/or sweet
- Read and be a part of several discussions about *The Serviceberry*
- Help design and create a centerpiece for the Mount Olive table that's a reflection of what thankfulness and reciprocity looks like at Mount Olive
- Help with set up or clean up
- Help bring a few tables from Mount Olive to the event
- Donate additional money to All Nations Indian Church. You can make the check out to Mount Olive and then put "All Nations Wopila" in the memo line

If you're interested in attending or any of the other opportunities, please let us know as soon as possible, or by Monday, November 17 .

Candy Husemoller at justice@mountolivechurch.org or
Jim Bargmann at neighborhood@mountolivechurch.org

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 supports 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 or contact Cynthia Prosek, RJCA Executive Director and Mount Olive Member.



The graphic is a light green rectangular poster. At the top left and right are green leaf icons. The main title 'ECO FAITH COFFEE AND CONVERSATION' is in large, bold, dark green letters. Above it, in smaller green letters, is 'THE MINNEAPOLIS AREA SYNOD ECO FAITH TEAM PRESENTS'. To the right of the title are icons for a calendar, a clock, and a location pin, followed by the event details: 'November 15, 2025', '9:30am - 11:30am', and 'Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church, 12235 Old Rockford Rd, Plymouth, MN 55441'. Below the title is the subtitle 'Caring for Creation in Community'. Further down is a paragraph of text inviting people to join for coffee and conversation. At the bottom left is the 'EcoFaith Network' logo and 'Minneapolis Area Synod of the ELCA'. At the bottom right is an illustration of a man and a woman; the man is holding a megaphone and the woman is holding a sign with a plant, with a globe icon above them.

THE MINNEAPOLIS AREA SYNOD ECO FAITH TEAM PRESENTS

ECO FAITH COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

Caring for Creation in Community

Join us for a morning of coffee and conversation as we welcome in different creation care partners of the Minneapolis Area Synod. Hear about their work and how you can get involved. Coffee and pastries will be provided.

 EcoFaith Network
Minneapolis Area Synod
of the ELCA

 **November 15, 2025**
 **9:30am - 11:30am**
 **Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church**
12235 Old Rockford Rd
Plymouth, MN 55441



Candy Husemoller, the director of Mount Olive's Justice committee, will be attending and encourages members of Mount Olive interested in Climate Justice to also attend. You can let her know if you're interested/ registered at justice@mountolivechurch.org.

Mount Olive Lutheran Church

3045 Chicago Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55407

*A congregation of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

Sunday Eucharist: 8 & 10:45 am

Contact Us:

Phone: 612/827-5919

Web: www.mountolivechurch.org

Staff

Pastor – *Joseph Crippen*

Cantor – *Daniel Schwandt*

Vicar – *Erik Nelson*

Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry –
Jim Bargmann

Administrative Assistant – *Cha Posz*

Sexton – *Jose Moroch*

*Mount Olive is a Reconciling in Christ
congregation.*

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