



The Olive Branch

November 12, 2025

Accent on Worship

Vicar Erik Nelson

This week, our church's calendar commemorates Søren Aabye Kierkegaard, a Danish theologian, philosopher, and social critic. He died 170 years ago, on November 11, 1855. Though his life was short (only 42 years!), he was extremely prolific in his writings. One could spend a lifetime studying his ideas and philosophy.

One aspect of his philosophy that is

particularly interesting to me is the way that he viewed the modes of human existence in three categories: aesthetic, ethical, and religious. He believed it was natural to ascend from one to the next. He taught that humanity was freed from self-interest when they devoted themselves to ethical life, and by submitting to the divine, they can attain spiritual maturity. Though the aim is to move from one to the next, they are not in opposition. The mature person carries the best of each category with them. When one grows in ethical clarity, that doesn't mean they throw out the beauty and delight that comes with an aesthetic life. When one grows in spiritual maturity, they can't throw away the ethical framework that got them there. This leads a person to see their whole life as a unified and harmonious masterpiece, always growing in beauty and complexity. This goes with Kierkegaard's belief that faith is a task for a whole lifetime.

Kierkegaard's relationship to the church is also interesting to me. I believe it gives us some insight for our time. In his last days, he spoke out aggressively against the Danish Lutheran state church, arguing against their position as an institution fully intertwined with the state. In this fusion of church and state, they lost their ability to speak as boldly and critically as Kierkegaard wanted. As we see the separation of church and state continually eroded in our country, I believe we should take up Kierkegaard's challenge. In what ways has our church bent the knee to forces of empire? How have we let our own witness be dulled by our complacency?

The ELCA is one of only a handful of churches who commemorate Kierkegaard on our calendar. We have a unique opportunity to think about him this week and consider how his witness might reshape our witness.

Sunday Readings

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

November 23, 2025

Reign of Christ, year C

Jeremiah 23:1-6

Psalm 46

Colossians 1:11-20

Luke 23:33-43

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

The Olive Branch

Calendar

Wednesday, November 12

10:00 am Staff meeting
Noon Align to Learn Narcan training
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 13

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

Friday, November 14

7:00 pm Recovery Group

Saturday, November 15

10:00 am Foundation Board meeting

Sunday, November 16 – 23rd Sunday after Pentecost

8:00 am Holy Eucharist, followed by coffee and conversation
9:30 am Godly Play/ Adult Forum/ Youth Discussion
10:45 am Holy Eucharist, followed by coffee and conversation

Monday, November 17

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

Tuesday, November 18

Noon Bible Study
6:00 pm Neighborhood Ministry Committee meeting
6:30 pm Feminine Divine Group

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

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. 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.

Mount Olive Music & Fine Arts 2025–2026

Mount Olive Music & Fine Arts returns this month with a new season! Join us on **Sunday, November 30, 4:00 p.m.** for the Advent Procession, a liturgy of lessons & carols to welcome the season of wonder.

Later in the season, experience the papercut art of Aaron Silver, the dynamic musicality of Ukrainian pianist Bohdan Tataryn, and a hymn festival led by our own Cantor, Pastor, and Cantorei! See mountolivechurch.org/music/music-fine-arts-series for details.

Your support has sustained our Music & Fine Arts series for over three decades. Music & Fine Arts is separate from the congregational budget and relies on direct, over-and-above contributions to maintain programming. As we continue to welcome our new Cantor this year, please consider contributing to Music & Fine Arts to provide for this season. Committee members will be present in the west assembly room to receive contributions on Sunday mornings through November 30. You may also [make a contribution online](#), in the offering plate (be sure to mark it MFA), or at the church office. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Attention Worship Assistants!

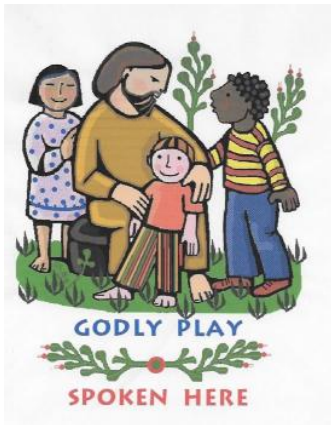
The Mount Olive Servant Schedule for **2026 Quarter 1 (January - March, + Holy Week)** will be published in December. Holy Week will be March 29-April 5.

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.

Notes From Palestine

By the time you read this, we should (hopefully) be home, but as I write this, we still have three days of listening, learning, and seeing in this amazing land. We have met, generous, kind, and thoughtful Palestinian people. We have seen disparity and beauty side-by-side. We have met with our partners, Dar-Al-Kalima University and Augusta Victoria Hospital, where we met people who desperately want us to listen, understand, and tell. We have indeed picked olives. We have much to share and will do so through personal reflections in this space in weeks to come.

- Judy Hinck

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 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.

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

 **EcoFaith Network**
Minneapolis Area Synod
of the ELCA



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 Morocho*

*Mount Olive is a Reconciling in Christ
congregation.*

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