



The Olive Branch

December 17, 2025

Accent on Worship *Jim Bargmann*

Sunday Readings

December 21, 2025

*Fourth Sunday of Advent,
year A*

Isaiah 7:10-16

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Romans 1:1-7

Matthew 1:18-25

December 28, 2025

*Second Sunday of Christmas
year A*

Isaiah 63:7-9

Psalm 148

Hebrews 2:10-18

Matthew 2:13-23

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

The very day you receive this issue of *The Olive Branch* marks the day when Christians since the 6th or 7th century have counted down the final days until Christmas by singing the so-called “O Antiphons.” Several variations and melodies for these verses exist, one of which we will sing together this upcoming Sunday in the form of the hymn, “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (ELW 257). And beautifully conjoined in our liturgy, we will also hear three of the four Scriptural uses of the word Immanuel or Emmanuel - “God with us” - in our readings from Isaiah and Matthew (the fourth also occurs in Isaiah, only a few verses after the end of our chosen reading for this week).

The O Antiphons recall the prophecies which foretold Jesus’ first coming and the characteristics of the reign of God.

For years, these verses have been a meaningful part of my own Advent devotional practice. Perhaps they might be for you as well.

O Sapientia - O Wisdom that comes from the very mouth of God, come and teach us.

O Adonai - Leader of the house of Israel who gave the law first to Moses, come deliver us.

O Root of Jesse - Once a stump, now a mighty tree, standing as an ensign for all people, Jews and Gentiles alike, come deliver us.

O Key of David - You alone have the power to open and close, a power given to no human; free the prisoner and the captive; bring out those who sit in the shadow of death.

O Dayspring - brightest, everlasting light and Son of Righteousness, enlighten all who sit in the shadow of death.

O Ruler of the Nations - Become our desire, our cornerstone, save humankind whom you formed with your own hands.

O Dayspring - O Emmanuel, the desire of all peoples and their salvation, come and save us, God with us.

Urgent Help Needed!

Our neighbors have reported ICE vehicles around Mount Olive and using our south parking lot for their vehicles. No Mount Olive staff member has observed this yet as it seems as though they are using our property early in the morning, before any of us are here (Tuesday it was 6 am), and at other times of the day when staff is on the other side of the building.

Additionally, we know from various reports that when ICE agents encounter a building that does not allow them to enter, they will simply wait outside the building until people they wish to target leave.

We are concerned about this unauthorized use of our property, and a lawyer who works in institutional immigration law has already been contacted about that issue to determine what action we can take.

Another issue we are concerned about is our neighbors and those who come to Mount Olive for liturgy, education, and for the services provided by our Neighborhood Ministry programs. **To address that concern, we are looking to fill an immediate need for helpers - people from the Mount Olive community who are willing to serve as observers and escorts for our guests and neighbors to ensure they get from our property to their vehicles, buses, or homes safely. This is a particularly applicable role for those who attended the UNIDOS-Monarca training earlier this year.**

For phase 1, we would like to ensure we have coverage from 9 am to 3 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays - the times we are open for Neighborhood Ministry services. If you are willing to help, please just show up on those days within those hours.

For phase 2, I would like to collect names of people who would be available to serve a similar role but early in the morning and/or the early evening, specifically focused on assisting our neighbors who, with our permission, use our parking lot. I don't have the specifics of what this will look like yet - but want to be prepared with names when or if it becomes a need that we can address. Please reply to this email and let me know if you are willing to serve in this way. And for anyone responding to this phase 2 request, know that in the case of inclement weather, the Mount Olive narthex provides a reasonable view of the south parking lot and would be available for use to stay warm.

Thank you all.

- Jim Bargmann

Calendar

Wednesday, December 17

10:00 am Staff meeting
5:30 pm Children's Choir Supper
6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsals
7:00 pm *Advent Vespers*
7:35 pm Cantorei rehearsal

Thursday, December 18

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

Friday, December 19

7:00 pm Recovery Group

Sunday, December 21 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:00 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee and conversation
9:30 am Godly Play / Youth Discussion / Adult Forum
10:45 am *Holy Eucharist, with the Sacrament of Holy Baptism*, followed coffee and conversation
12:30 pm Y4 Confirmation

Monday, December 22

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

Tuesday, December 23

Noon Bible Study

Wednesday, December 24 – Christmas Eve

4:00 pm *Christmas Eve Eucharist*
9:30 pm Choral prelude
10:00 pm *Christmas Eve Eucharist*

Thursday, December 25 – Christmas Day

10:00 am *Christmas Day Eucharist*

Friday, December 26

Church offices closed

7:00 pm Recovery group

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 first session of the new year on January 10, the group will consider an author new to the group, Niall Williams, as we read *Time of the Child*. On February 14 we'll take one of our rare trips into nonfiction as we read *A Terrible Glory: Custer and the Little Bighorn - The Last Great Battle of the American West*, by James Donivan.

Everyone is invited to join when-ever 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](#).

Winter Wear Needed!

This time of year, Neighborhood Ministry is often asked by our neighbors about warm clothes for those who come to get assistance. If you have any coats, jackets, scarves, gloves/mittens/ or hats to donate, please know we can put them to good use. Drop them off in the coat room adjacent to the kitchenette on the upper level. There is an area marked for coat donations. Mittens, gloves, hats, and scarves can be shared in the bins in the coat room. Thank you!

Midweek Advent Vespers

Midweek Evening Prayer
will be prayed each
Wednesday evening during
Advent (Dec. 3, 10, and 17),
at 7:00 pm.

All are welcome.

Staff Christmas Gifts

This is the time of the year
that we give gifts to our staff
to recognize the wonderful
work that they do among us
all year. If you would like to
contribute to these gifts,
drop your contribution in
the offering plate or leave it
in the office. Be sure it is
clearly designated for "Staff
Gifts." Thanks!

The Olive Branch Publication Schedule

Please note that there will
not be an *Olive Branch*
published during the week
between Christmas and New
Year. There will be an issue
published December 24, but
not on December 31.
Regular weekly publication
resumes with the January 7,
2026 issue.

Christmas and Epiphany Worship at Mount Olive

Christmas Eve: Wednesday, December 24, 2025

Christmas Eve Eucharist at 4:00 p.m.

Choral Prelude at 9:30 p.m.

Christmas Eve Eucharist at 10:00 p.m.

Christmas Day: Thursday, December 25, 2025

Festival Eucharist at 10:00 a.m.

First Sunday of Christmas: December 28, 2025

Holy Eucharist at 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.

Name of Jesus: Thursday, January 1, 2026

Holy Eucharist at 10:00 a.m.

Second Sunday of Christmas: January 4, 2026

Holy Eucharist at 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.

Epiphany of Our Lord: Tuesday, January 6, 2026

Holy Eucharist at 7:00 p.m.

Baptism of Our Lord: Sunday, January 11, 2026

Holy Eucharist at 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.

Meal Train!

Elizabeth Manning and Kevin Vasquez recently had a baby
who will be baptized at Mount Olive. A meal train has been
set up for them and members of Mount Olive are invited to
sign up to support them if you are able. The meal train starts
this month and currently goes through January. Thanks for
any support you can provide! Here is the link to the Meal
train signup: <https://mealtrain.com/n90g0d>

Save the Date: Simpson Community Shelter and Apartments Community Celebration

Please join us in celebrating the opening of the new Simpson Community Shelter and Apartments on **Saturday, January 10 from 11:00 am to 2:30 pm**. Their beautiful new facility is located at 2740 1st Ave. S. in Minneapolis.

Celebrate the opening of the new Simpson Community Shelter & Apartments. Take a self-guided tour, meet the Simpson staff, learn about our programs and explore ways to get involved at Simpson. Light refreshments will be served.

Simpson Housing is one of our Neighborhood Ministry partner organizations, providing vital services to those experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity. Please plan to join us in celebrating the opening of their new facility.



Impromptu Former Vicar Reunion

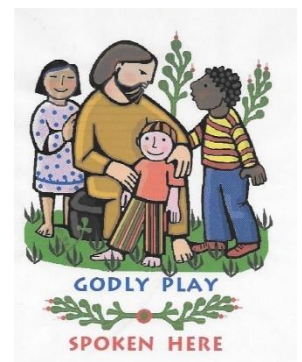
Look who met up for a photo at the recent Minneapolis/St. Paul Ministerium! It's former Mount Olive vicars-now-pastors Mollie Hamre, Lauren Mildahl, and Bristol Reading.

Thanks to Lauren for sending this photo along!

Godly Play This Week

This Sunday we will all join together to once again listen to those voices that prepare us for Christmas. **Both circles will meet upstairs in the front of the Sanctuary in quietness at 9:30.** We will then feast together in the West Assembly Room. **Parents, feel free to join us in the nave and know that we will probably be ending our feast early. *There will be NO Godly Play on December 28.***

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



Augusta Victoria Hospital / Olive Picking

We'd had an amazing visit at Dar-al-Kalama and anticipated we'd have the same at AVH. However, guide Sami kept saying that he was having difficulty setting the meeting/tour because an international group from the Lutheran World Federation was also visiting. And then we



heard that they "saved" three olive trees for us. Good grief. We didn't want to be a cute photo op or burden. What would this be like?

First—the trees weren't "saved" just assigned. The two young men picking/raking had a whole grove to do. We were helping, albeit slowly. We had to comb and pick, but we got our three trees clear. At the grove's gate we met Sieglinde Weinbrenner, the LWF representative to the hospital.

AVH's specialty is advanced cancer and nephrology care for Palestinians. It's always difficult, but now Palestinians aren't allowed into Jerusalem, and those in Gaza aren't even allowed out. Frustration in her voice was clear. Example: a young boy in Gaza had a rare cancer they knew how to treat. He was not allowed to come. He died. We all felt discouraged. How could we partner?

The next day's joint service with Redeemer Lutheran was at AVH. Hope and joy broke out. We worshipped with the LWF multinational group of leaders as well as the local Redeemer Lutheran congregation. The service was in both English and Arabic, and we confessed our faith

each in our own language—a living Pentecost. We heard a Gospel message from the president of the LWF, Bishop Henrik Stubkjaer. We witnessed the blessing of a newborn and her mother. We met the young pastor from Redeemer and heard of her faith. We learned that LWF leaders from many countries were there to learn and support—just like we were. We listened. We bring you their story and their hope.

~ Judy Hinck

Top photo: Sieglinde Weinbrenner speaks to the Mount Olive Group

Middle photo: Picking Olives

Lower photo: Bishop Henrik Stubkjaer, President - LWF



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

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On the Web: mountolivechurch.org

Staff

Pastor – *Joseph Crippen*

Cantor – *Daniel Schwandt*

Vicar – *Erik Nelson*

Administrative Assistant – *Cha Posz*

Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry

– *Jim Bargmann*

Sexton – *Jose Morocho*

*Mount Olive is a Reconciling in Christ
congregation.*

In This Issue

- **Accent on Worship – Jim Bargmann**
- **Christmas/Epiphany Worship Schedule**
- **Palestine Trip Reflections**
- **Winter Wear Needed!**
- **Another Meal Train – Sign Up Now!**
- **Urgent Help Needed for our Neighbors**