



The Olive Branch

Ash Wednesday, February 18, 2026

Sunday Readings

February 22, 2026
First Sunday in Lent, year A
Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
Psalm 32
Romans 5:12-19
Matthew 4:1-11

March 1, 2026
Second Sunday in Lent, Year A
Genesis 12:1-4a
Psalm 121
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17
John 3:1-17

Accent on Worship

A Clean Heart

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.” *Psalm 51:10*

We have put away our Alleluias now, until our Easter celebration, and we turn our eyes toward Lent, and the journey of faith and life those six weeks bring us.

And the start of this is Ash Wednesday, when we hear God’s call to us to repent and seek forgiveness. When we sing the song of David as he asked forgiveness from God: “Create in me a clean heart, O God.” As we focus on our truth as God’s children, our prayer in Lent is that God make us new inside, clean us inside and out.

That’s why Ash Wednesday is such a good pivot from Epiphany to Lent. Whether we are trying to live in our call as God’s light and love in the world, our Epiphany experience, or are looking to our baptismal truth and what that means for our daily journey, we need God to make our hearts clean. With our inmost being clean and looking to God, not only are our lives lived as the children of light we are, but we are able to witness to God’s grace as well.

Let’s pray David’s prayer together in these days, that God might so clean your heart and make you the person God has called you to be, the people God needs us to be.

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

Pastor Joseph Crippen

The Olive Branch

Mount Olive Music & Fine Arts Presents

Lent Procession

This Sunday, February 22, 4:00 pm

All are invited to this liturgy of lessons and carols to welcome the season of renewal.

***You are not obligated to complete the work;
Neither are you free to abandon it.*** Pirkei Avot 2:16, The Mishnah

Mount Olive Music & Fine Arts would like to commission a new paper cut art work from Aaron Silver. The above text will be the main theme of the piece along with three strong, deeply rooted olive trees. Olive trees live for centuries because as long as the roots remain the tree will continue to send up new growth.

Our service missions at Mount Olive are also deeply rooted and reflect the above text. Our Neighborhood Ministries, which includes the diaper depot, bus fare, rent support, and other programs will not solve the many poverty issues and concerns of our neighborhood, but we cannot ignore the needs when we can help in any small way. Mount Olive alone cannot make a major impact on world climate justice, either, however we can install climate friendly geothermal heating and cooling, install LED lighting and add solar panels to our roof.

The Palestinian/Jewish struggle is overwhelming. However a group from Mount Olive recently traveled to Palestine, not to resolve the long-standing problems in that region but to meet some of the Palestinian people and get to know them and let them know that we support them any way we are able.

Please contribute to the fund to complete the new art commission. We need \$1800 for a large, framed artwork. If you would like to be a part of this commission please contact Paul Nixdorf at 612-296-0055, pn@paulnixdorf.com . You can send or leave a check made out to "Mount Olive Lutheran Church" and in the memo include, "Artwork commission, MFA"

Aaron has completed a miniature version of the larger work, it features one olive tree along with the text in both Hebrew and English. Please check the table in the exhibit if you are interested in purchasing one of these miniature works.

Thank you for your consideration in being a part of this commission.

-Paul Nixdorf, Music & Fine Arts Committee member



The Olive Branch

Calendar

Wednesday, February 18

9:00 am Staff meeting
Noon *Ash Wednesday Eucharist*
5:30 pm Children's Choir supper
6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsals
(No Cantorei rehearsal this evening)
7:00 pm *Ash Wednesday Eucharist*

Thursday, February 19

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

Friday, February 20

10:00 am Funeral Visitation: Marilyn Gebauer
11:00 am *Funeral Eucharist*
7:00 pm Recovery group

Saturday, February 21

2:00 pm Funeral Visitation: Rhoda Nelson
3:00 pm *Funeral Eucharist*

Sunday, February 22 - First Sunday in Lent, year A

8:00 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed coffee and conversation
9:30 pm Godly Play/Youth Discussion/ Adult Forum
9:30 am Family Music Time LIVE
10:45 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed coffee and conversation
12:30 pm Y1 Confirmation
4:00 pm *MFA Event: Lent Procession*

Monday, February 23

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

Tuesday, February 24

Noon Bible Study

Midweek Lenten Worship

Wednesdays in Lent

Holy Eucharist at Noon,
followed by Soup Luncheon

Vespers at 7:00 pm,
preceded by Soup Supper at 6 pm

All are welcome.

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

Our January book group was canceled so that we, too, could celebrate JoEllen Kloehn's life. Consequently, *Time of the Child* by Niall Williams will now be the book for consideration on February 14.

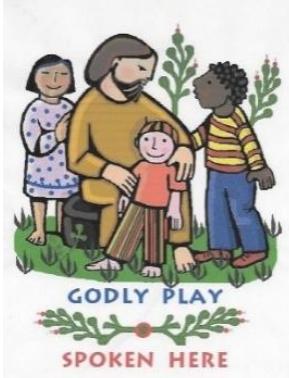
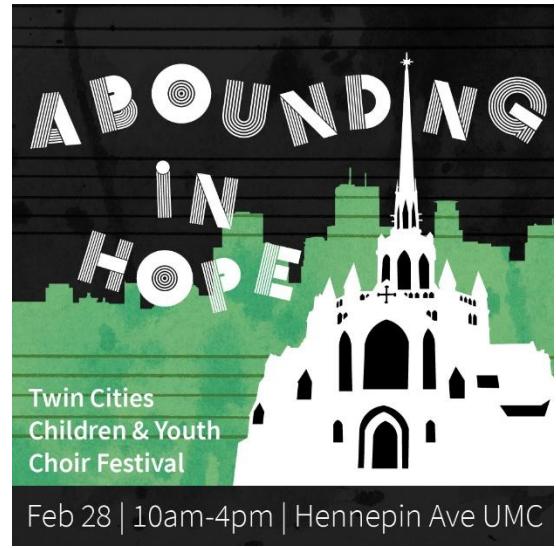
Everyone is invited to join whenever you are able, at 10 a.m. in the Library, usually on the second Saturday of each month. The group has been using Zoom to provide remote access to the sessions. If you would like to participate in the group, you can either attend the monthly sessions which meet at the church in person or join remotely via Zoom. To join from your computer, tablet, or smart phone, [click here](#).

The Olive Branch

Abounding in Hope Choir Festival

Members of Mount Olive's Children and Youth Choirs will participate in a choir festival for metro-area church choirs hosted by Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church. Jennifer Cadwell will lead the children's choir. Jennifer formerly directed children's choirs at Centennial United Methodist Church in Roseville and currently works with Hennepin Chime. Paolo Debuque will lead the youth choir. Paolo is a doctoral student at the University of Minnesota and most recently directed the Viking Chorus and Chapel Choir at St. Olaf College.

Everyone is welcome to the culminating hymn festival, *Abounding in Hope*, Saturday, February 28 at 3:00 pm at Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church, 511 Groveland Avenue.



Godly Play This Week

This Sunday, Circle 1 will learn about The Lenten Puzzle while Circle 2 will hear about the Long Road to Jerusalem.

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

Global Ministry Action Alert

At our Taste of Palestine many of you asked how we/you could better support of Palestinian sisters and brothers. We referenced the ELCA Advocacy effort called Samud. We also spoke of the Israeli settlement expansion efforts which harm Palestinians, peace, and justice.

If you would like to learn more and take action, follow the link and contact your representatives as many of the travel team have done: <https://act.elca.org/page/93847/action/1?chain>.



Soup Makers Needed for Lent

Sign up to cook and serve a pot of soup for Wednesdays in Lent. Two meals are served: the first after the noon liturgy (about 25 people), and one prior to Evening Prayer (about 15 people). You may choose to provide soup and bread for both meals on a Wednesday, or just one meal.

A sign-up sheet is taped to the coffee serving counter in the East Assembly Room, so when you grab your coffee on Sunday morning, take a moment to sign up!

Upcoming Adult Forums

Feb. 15 & 22 – “Practicing Hope, and Not Just ‘Having’ It,” a 2-part forum presented by The Rev. Cody J. Sanders, Ph.D. Faith, hope, and love: Paul’s big three in First Corinthians 13. Why do we have no catechism for learning to practice hope? Why do we often just assume we all know what “hope” means when we invoke the subject in times of despair? These two forums will take a renewed look at hope as a practice of Christian community undomesticated from optimism, or progress narratives, or wishful thinking. We will use this conversation to begin rewilding our hopeful practice in an era of polycrisis, collapse, and despair when we need communities of hopeful practice the most.

Attention, Sunday Servants!

The Mount Olive Servant Schedule for 2026 Quarter 2 (April - June) will be published in early March.

Please send any scheduling preferences or dates you will be unavailable to me by this Friday, February 20.

Please let me know any questions you may have.

Thank you.

- Greg Murphy

gregRmurphy@gmail.com

Lent Begins Today!

**Ash Wednesday,
February 18
Holy Eucharist at
Noon & 7:00 pm**

All are welcome.

Paper Bags Needed!

Mount Olive Neighborhood Ministry is in need of brown paper bags with handles for delivering diapers and other resources.

If you have some you can spare, please leave them in the coat room at church. We will pick them up from there. Thanks!

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February Neighborhood Ministries Partner of the Month: *Walk-In Counseling Center*

Walk-In Counseling Center provides “free, easily accessible mental health counseling to people with urgent needs and few service options.” Counselors work with people struggling with depression, anxiety, chemical dependency, domestic violence, and many other emotional and interpersonal concerns.

Mount Olive has chosen to support each of our Partners of the Month though 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 the work of Walk-In Counseling Center, please visit their website at <https://www.walkin.org>.

Second Annual Mount Olive Fish Fry Pilgrimage

Back by popular demand, Mount Olive’s Second Annual Lenten Fish Fry Pilgrimage begins this Fryday, February 20. The season’s schedule is listed below. Check each host church’s website for discount pricing, payment options, and other events on offer. Mount Olive folks typically arrive between 5:30 and 6:00 p.m. each week. Come join the fishy fun!

Fryday, February 20: [St. Matthew’s Catholic Community](#), 510 Hall Ave., Saint Paul, \$16, 4:30-7:30 p.m.

Fryday, February 27: [Church of St. Albert the Great](#) 2836 33rd Ave. S., Minneapolis, \$18, 4:30-7:30 p.m. This one is very popular, so plan on arriving with seat mates and waiting for a while.

Fryday, March 6: [Holy Family Catholic Church](#), 5900 W. Lake St., St. Louis Park, \$12, 5:00-6:30 p.m.

Fryday, March 13: [Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church](#), 1 Lourdes Pl., Minneapolis, \$15, 5:00-7:00 p.m. Check website for parking info.

Fryday, March 20: [Church of St. Peter](#), 1405 Sibley Memorial Hwy., Mendota, Freewill donation, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Fryday, March 27: [Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church](#) 5426 12th Ave. S., Minneapolis, \$20, 5:00-7:00 p.m. OLP was last year’s overall favorite, so don’t miss it!

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

Staff

Pastor – *Joseph Crippen*

Cantor – *Daniel Schwandt*

Vicar – *Erik Nelson*

Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry –
Jim Bargmann

Administrative Assistant – *Cha Posz*

*Mount Olive is a Reconciling in Christ
congregation.*

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- MFA Lent Procession: This Sunday, Feb. 22, 4 pm