

# The Olive Branch

February 11, 2026



## Accent on Worship

*Vicar Erik Nelson*

### Sunday Readings

#### February 15, 2026

*Transfiguration of Our Lord*

Exodus 24:12-18

Psalm 2

2 Peter 1:16-21

Matthew 17:1-9

#### February 22, 2026

*First Sunday in Lent*

Genesis 2:15-17

Psalm 32

Roman 5:12-19

Matthew 4:1-11

### Accent on Worship

This week, our church commemorates Sts. Cyril and Methodius, two Thessalonian brothers who were instrumental in the spread of Christianity among the Slavic peoples. The West commemorates the brothers on February 14, the anniversary of Saint Cyril's death.

The Cyrillic alphabet is probably the most prominent piece of their legacy. The alphabet attributed to the brothers is based in Greek, with more letters added to represent sounds unique to the Slavic languages. Today, this alphabet is used for many languages across Europe and Asia, including Russian, Ukrainian, and Mongolian.

Beyond their alphabets, the brothers' legacy lives on in the liturgical lives of many Orthodox churches. The brothers worked to translate portions of the Bible and the liturgy into Slavonic, a language accessible to the Slavic people they were working with. The brothers' work was, in some ways, in conflict with the work of missionaries of the Roman Church, who insisted that the work be done in Latin. The brothers' work had success because they operated in the language of the people, bringing the Gospel to them in ways that they could understand and appreciate. To this day, the liturgy of Orthodox churches that use Slavonic is a legacy of the brothers' work.

The East commemorates the brothers on May 11. In many places in eastern Europe, that day has also become a day to celebrate their language and culture. As we remember the brothers today, we can follow their lead in honoring and uplifting the other cultures we encounter. In many times and places, Christians have hurt others by

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

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trying to impose our own culture on them. As we live today in a land of many cultures, the brothers help us remember that each culture is a unique expression of God's creation. The cultures we encounter are like the beautiful colors cast from the prism of humanity. As the brothers honored the Slavic people as they brought the gospel, may we also honor our neighbors as we work together in the Reign of Christ.

- Vicar Erik Nelson

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## Trip to Palestine in Photos

There is an old saying that a picture is worth a thousand words. In many ways, pictures tell the story better than words ever could.

In November 2025, nineteen members of the Mount Olive Church family traveled to Palestine on a journey of faith, learning, and connection. Along the way, we encountered powerful moments, meaningful places, and unforgettable people - experiences captured through photographs.

We invite you to explore this online photo album, which offers a visual window into the trip. As you view the images, we hope you'll take time to reflect, share them with family and friends, and help amplify the story of what was seen and experienced.

Thank you for walking this journey with us - one photo at a time.

Mount Olive Trip to Palestine 2025: <https://imageevent.com/hcha/mountolivetriptopalestine2025>

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## Bring Out Your Dead Palms!

Do you have palm branches at home left over from last year's Passion Sunday services?

If so, bring them to church and place them in the basket in the narthex. These will be burned on Shrove Tuesday for use in our Ash Wednesday services.

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## Mount Olive Music & Fine Arts Presents

### *Lent Procession*

Sunday, February 22, 4:00 pm

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

# The Olive Branch

## Calendar

### Wednesday, February 4

10:00 am Staff meeting  
5:30 pm Children's Choir supper  
6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsals  
6:00 pm Community Well-Being Committee meeting  
7:00 pm Cantorei rehearsal  
7:00 pm Y3 Confirmation

### Thursday, February 5

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

### Friday, February 6

7:00 pm Recovery group

### Sunday, February 8 - Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

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  
12:00 Noon Taste of Palestine meal

### Monday, February 9

5:30 p.m. Family Music Time (online only)  
6:30 pm Recorder group  
7:00 pm Vicar Committee meeting  
7:00 pm Monday Night WAVE (N.A.)

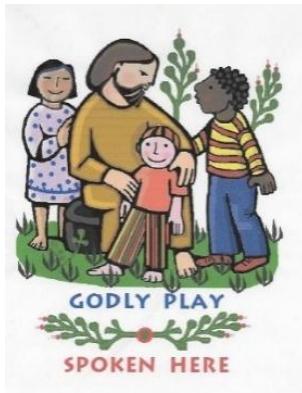
### Tuesday, February 10

9:00 am Diaper Depot staff meeting  
Noon Bible Study

## Godly Play This Week

This Sunday we will continue telling Jesus' own stories. This Sunday, Circle 1 will learn about The Leaven while Circle 2 will hear about the story of the Mustard Seed.

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



## 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](#).

## 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 through 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>.

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## 2025 Contribution Statements

Contribution statements for donations made to Mount Olive during 2025 were mailed last week. Please take a moment to review your statement. If you have any questions about it, please don't hesitate to call the church office, 612-827-5919, or contact us by email: [welcome@mountolivechurch.org](mailto:welcome@mountolivechurch.org) .

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## Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper February 17, 5:30 pm

Come join us for a pancake supper (and pancake races!) from 5:30 to 7pm on February 17 in the undercroft. Everyone is welcome!

After the pancake supper, we will gather to burn palm branches from last year's Palm Sunday services for use in the Ash Wednesday Eucharists the following day.

### *Lent Begins.*

## 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!

## Ghost Chorales

The Minneapolis Choir Collective will present a concert, "Ghost Chorales," this Saturday, Feb. 14, at 7:00 pm at Mount Olive. This is a concert benefitting, in part, the Minnehaha Food Shelf at Minnehaha United Methodist Church.

Tickets are available [here](#).

## 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 Friday, February 20. Please let me know any questions you may have. Thank you.

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

## Our Neighbor Support Efforts

Now that we have a little more clarity and structure to our neighbor support efforts, I wanted to write a quick article to clarify and summarize what we are doing at this present time to care for our neighbors, specifically in terms of providing food and rent support. All our existing programs - bus cards, assistance with IDs, driver's licenses, birth certificates, diapers, and rental assistance through Align Minneapolis - are continuing unchanged.

Through the cooperative efforts of the Neighborhood Ministry and Justice leadership, we are involved in two parallel but connected efforts to care for our neighbors.

Candy Husemoller has been leading our effort to form a new partnership with Iglesia Dios Habla Hoy (DHH) where we will support their vibrant and large food delivery program.

This effort will involve picking up bulk food donations from DHH, repacking that food into boxes for individual families, and then delivering that food to homes. Most of this work will happen on Tuesdays. We will begin with a list of about 25 families, provided by DHH, but will have the ability to add families, either on our own or from the list collected by DHH as our capacity allows.

If you are interested in connecting to this work, you can [use this link to sign up](#). There are slots for specific types of work needed. Contact Candy Husemoller at [justice@mountolivechurch.org](mailto:justice@mountolivechurch.org) with questions.

In addition, there is a growing group of families with whom Mount Olive already has a relationship, through personal connections with our Sexton or the neighborhood block captains from the Powderhorn Park and Central neighborhoods.

With these families, we are shopping for them, packing up personalized boxes of food, diapers, and formula, and then delivering them to homes. Also, with some of these families, we are providing emergency rental assistance and other services. Most of this work is happening on Thursdays. If you are interested in connecting to this work, please email Jim Bargmann at [neighborhood@mountolivechurch.org](mailto:neighborhood@mountolivechurch.org) if interested in joining this project or with questions. If you are interested in supporting this work financially, you can use the donate link on the Mount Olive web site (or access the same [using this link](#)) or write a check specifying "Neighbor Support" on the memo line.

And if there is any confusion about how these two programs fit together and why we are pursuing both at this time, I hope this illustration might help. In Minnesota, we love our bodies of water. With both lakes and rivers, most have a shore or beach area leading to wide sections of shallow water appropriate for swimming and other similar activities for a wide variety of people from all backgrounds and abilities. But the most bodies of water also have significant deep areas too. Here is where more intense activities can take place - boating, fishing, water skiing. And where most of the natural life of a lake finds a place to live and grow and thrive. Both the shallow parts and the deep parts are necessary for a thriving water ecosystem. This is also true in social services too. We need the broad range ministries like DHH that can serve large numbers of people quickly and flexibly. But the deeper ministries with more significant relationships, more services, and more investment in the whole life of a person or people, like our own internal program, are important too. So these two go hand in hand to form a full and thriving program of supporting our neighbors.

Please join us in either or both as your time and energy allow.

- Jim Bargmann, Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry

# 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

On the Web: [mountolivechurch.org](http://mountolivechurch.org)

**Staff**

Pastor – *Joseph Crippen*

Cantor – *Daniel Schwandt*

Vicar – *Erik Nelson*

Administrative Assistant – *Cha Posz*

Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry  
– *Jim Bargmann*

*Mount Olive is a Reconciling in Christ  
congregation.*

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