



# The Olive Branch

## SUNDAY READINGS

**Sunday, January 9**  
*Baptism of Our Lord*

Isaiah 43:1-7

Psalm 29

Acts 8:14-17

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

**Sunday, January 16**  
*Second Sunday after*  
*Epiphany*

Isaiah 62:1-5

Psalm 36:5-10

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

John 2:1-11

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

## Accent on Worship

*Jim Bargmann*

Perhaps my mind is making connections that were never intended. Or more likely, the Holy Spirit is working in my mind to make connections that were perhaps not intended by those who prepared the lectionary but were completely intentional in Her infinite wisdom.

On January 1, at our liturgy for the Name of Jesus, we heard from Luke about Jesus being given his name, the name first given to Mary before he was conceived, eight days after his birth.

The next day, celebrating the Second Sunday of Christmas, we hear from John about the Word, Jesus, God himself, becoming flesh and living among us.

And this week, from Isaiah, we will hear, "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you... you are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you..."

God, who is given a human name, comes to live, to dwell, with us and then call us by name and claim us as their very own. Words of great comfort, at least to me, and reminiscent of words I have spoken to my own children on many occasions (this recollection calls back to yet another experience in our recent liturgies where Pastor Crippen taught about our God as parent).

A couple times over the past months, my dear daughter found herself overwhelmed by some situations in her life and the release came in the form of tears while sitting in my lap. The specific situations were out

*(continued on page 2)*

## WEEKLY CALENDAR

**Wed., January 5**

10 am – Staff meeting  
 5:30 pm - Children's Choir  
 (on Zoom)  
 6 pm –Neighborhood  
 Ministries Comm. Mtng.  
 7:15 pm Cantorei rehearsal

**Thurs., January 6**  
***Epiphany of Our Lord***  
**7pm – Epiphany**  
***Eucharist***

7 pm – Narcotics  
 Anonymous

**Fri., January 7**

7pm – Recovery Group

**Sat., January 8**

10 am – Book Discussion

**Sun., January 9**

***Baptism of Our Lord***  
**9 am – Holy Eucharist**  
**11 am – Holy Eucharist**  
*(livestreamed)*

**Mon., January 10**

7 pm – Vestry meeting

**Tues., January 11**

Noon – Bible Study

**Wed., January 12**

10 am – Staff meeting  
 5:30 pm - Children's Choir  
 (on Zoom)  
 6 pm –Neighborhood  
 Ministries Comm. Mtng.  
 7:15 pm Cantorei rehearsal

## Sunday Morning Schedule

There are **two worship services each Sunday morning, at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.** To be able to continue COVID-related safety measures, we ask the following:

During this time, we will continue to request R.S.V.P responses for each worship in order to allow for physical distancing in the sanctuary. We will continue to require that you wear a well-fitting mask that covers your **nose and mouth**. Please do not move the pew ropes, to help with social distancing, and **please** leave the short pews for those with wheelchairs. Coffee hour has been temporarily suspended.

The link to RSVP for worship is

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/mountolive> .

This link will be live each Wednesday for the following Sunday.

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## Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

of her control (and out of my control as well), so there was very little that could be done to actually solve the things causing the overwhelming feelings.

While holding her in my arms, I found myself repeating things like, “You don’t have to be afraid. We will do this together. You are my Elizabeth, my promise, my gift of God (recalling who she is, whose she is, and how she was named). No matter what happens, I will be with you (the promise of a daddy to his daughter). You are important to me (oh so important) and I love you (a statement of reality, of commitment, of relationship).

I didn’t intend to be Biblical and I certainly was not quoting Biblical phrasing when comforting my daughter. They were my words. But they are also words from our parent God to his precious children.

Perhaps like me, you find comfort in the image of our parent God holding us in his arms, no matter the circumstances, and saying, “do not fear...I have called you by name, you are mine...I will be with you... you are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you...”

- Jim Bargmann

## Constitution and Bylaws Review

The Mount Olive Vestry has authorized a process to review the constitution and by-laws of the congregation, with any resultant changes to be authorized at a legally called meeting of the voting members in 2022.

The following persons have been appointed to begin this process: Gretchen Campbell-Johnson, Pastor Crippen, Lora Dundek, George Ferguson, Tricia Van Ee, Marty Melang, John Bjork, and Karen Mohrlant. If you have suggested changes to the constitution/by-laws which this group could consider, please submit those in writing to any member of the committee, or email your comments to Gretchen Campbell-Johnson at [president@mountolivechurch.org](mailto:president@mountolivechurch.org).

To obtain a copy of the constitution/by-laws, please call or email the church office.

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## Help Needed for Baptism Anniversary Cards

If you've received a card from Mount Olive noting the anniversary of your baptism, you've seen the work of a set of dedicated volunteers who write these cards. This effort could use a couple more people who would be willing to spend a few minutes each week addressing 1-2 cards and writing a brief message on each one.

You don't need a computer or email - just legible handwriting! The church supplies the cards, envelopes and postage, and a list of about 25 names every four months. We'll even give you suggestions for what to write, if you wish.

If you're interested, please contact Lora at 651/645-6636, or <mailto:lhdundek@usfamily.net>.

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## A Note of Thanks

Thank you, thank you!

Many thanks to the people of Mount Olive for the very generous Christmas gifts we received, and for all your kindness and support throughout the year! You are Christ to us in so many ways, and we are deeply grateful for you in our lives. Blessings and peace to you all in this new year in God's care!

*- The staff of Mount Olive: Jim Bargmann, Andrea Bonneville, David Cherwien, Joseph Crippen, Dietrich Jessen, Cha Posz.*

## Making a Home. Being the presence of God

Take a moment, wherever you are sitting or standing in your home or apartment. See your rugs, your furniture, the pictures on your walls, the small things on shelves and tabletops that make this place you live your HOME!

Soon we will be helping an Afghan family settle in our community. They left most of their possessions and so much more behind. There is no way for us to replace all of those losses, but we can create a warm and comfortable place which can become their "home" in their new city. **And YOU can help!**

You have been reading regular Afghan Resettlement updates from Connie Marty in *The Olive Branch* and elsewhere. Today we are lifting up some additional opportunities for you to participate in this mission we have accepted as the people of Mount Olive:

**Shop!!** from our recently established Target Gift Registry. Here is the link: <https://www.target.com/gift-registry/gift/dmountolivefamily2022>

You can also make a **monetary donation** to help with other resettlement expenses. Send it by mail or place in the offering at worship. Mark your gift "**Afghan Resettlement.**"

If you have lightly used **household items** to donate, sign-up on the **NESTING** sheet in the West Assembly Room area, or email [ech914@comcast.net](mailto:ech914@comcast.net)

If you are able to help with moving in, when that day arrives, please sign up on the **Moving Day** sheet in the West Assembly Room area.

We will want to give the apartment assigned to our family a thorough cleaning - that's Mount Olive hospitality! Let us know if you are willing to help out. Add your name on the **Clean-Up** sheet in the West Assembly Room.

We have a wonderful opportunity to be the presence of God for a family, to offer them love and assistance. **Step up. Be part of this wonderful gift to some who will be making their new home with us.**

## Book Discussion

The Mount Olive Book Discussion group meets on the second Saturday of each month, beginning at 10:00 am. They have resumed meeting at church.

On January 8, they will finish (delayed because of the snow on Dec 11) discussion of *Hamnet* and then move on to *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare. On February 12, they will discuss *The Seed Keeper* by Diane Wilson.

## Tuesday Noon Bible Study Link

The Tuesday Noon Bible Study is meeting in person, in the West Lounge. For those who are unable to come in person, we will continue to hold the meeting 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.](#)

## Afghan Resettlement—Waiting for a Family

### UPDATE #5—A Special Skill Needed

Our paperwork has been submitted, and now we wait and prepare. And as we wait, we are learning from another congregation who recently welcomed a family. They suggested that we ask for **a volunteer who will specifically help the family with techie connections**: how to sign up for service; how to get an email account; how to get the proper phone accounts—and all of those other things that this writer (Judy) doesn't know how to do. Of course, we don't know what level of skill our family will bring to the table, but we'd like to have a volunteer prepared to step in. And perhaps most of this can be done through remote conversations. Is that you? If so, please email or call Connie at the contact listed below.



**If you wish to donate to this effort, mark your gift as Afghan Resettlement.**

We anticipate that our family will arrive in early January. Email Connie Marty at [Conniejmarty@gmail.com](mailto:Conniejmarty@gmail.com) or at [missions@mountolivechurch.org](mailto:missions@mountolivechurch.org). Or call Connie at 651-468-1632 or Judy Hinck at 612-812-7342.

## Welcome to our new Sexton!

José Morocho joins the Mount Olive staff today, January 5. Not only is he one of our neighbors, but he also comes to us with a variety of work experience including managing kitchens, remodeling, cleaning, and concrete construction. During the last month he has also been doing the snow removal for us taking the burden off our volunteers.

As with our previous Sextons, his normal work week will be Wednesday – Sunday, 7:00 am – 3:00 pm. That is until we have snow or other special events that require a change during the week.

Please welcome José to Mount Olive when you see him!

## **Our Neighborhood Ministry Partner for January is Our Saviour's Community Services.**

Not only is Our Saviour's Community Services an independent non-profit started by our sister congregation, but Mount Olive volunteers provide meals at their shelter each month. In addition to the shelter for adults experiencing homelessness, Our Saviour's provides transitional housing for women who have experienced domestic abuse and permanent supportive housing for men and women who live with a mental illness, physical disability, and/or substance use disorders.

For more information on Our Saviour's Community Services, visit their website at: <https://oscs-mn.org/>

Mount Olive has chosen to support 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.



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*A congregation of the Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in America*

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**Church Staff**

Pastor – [Joseph Crippen](#)

Interim Cantor – [Dietrich Jessen](#)

Vicar – [Andrea Bonneville](#)

Administrative Assistant – [Cha Posz](#)

Coordinator of Neighborhood

Ministries - [Jim Bargmann](#)

Sexton – José Morocho

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## In This Issue

- **Accent on Worship – Jim Bargmann**
- **Card Writers Needed**
- **Afghan Family Resettlement Updates**
- **Welcome to Our New Sexton**
- **Neighborhood Ministries Partner of the Month**