



The Olive Branch

July 16, 2025

Sunday Readings

July 20, 2025

*Sixth Sunday after
Pentecost, Lect. 16 C*

Genesis 18:1-10a

Psalm 15

Colossians 1:15-28

Luke 10:38-42

July 27, 2025

*Seventh Sunday after
Pentecost, Lect. 17 C*

Genesis 18:20-32

Psalm 138

Colossians 2:6-19

Luke 11:1-13

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

Accent on Worship

Jim Bargmann

The Gospel lesson we will hear on July 27 recounts the story of Jesus teaching his followers and us what has come to be known as The Lord's Prayer. Luke's recounting of Jesus' teaching also includes some additional teaching on prayer in general. This instruction, along with the first reading from Genesis 18 can be challenging. What is really going on here? What is God trying to teach us about this gift they themselves have given us?

The reading from Genesis seems to paint a picture of a God who is swayed by the persistence of Abraham's prayers. It paints a picture of a God we believe to be all-powerful and all-knowing who changes their mind at the persistent prayer of one of God's creatures. And similarly, Jesus' teaching encourages persistence in prayer. For one, I do not find this to be a comfort. I look to God to be far more knowledgeable and far more powerful than I. I know my own fallibility and inconsistencies and penchant for change - whether justifiable or not.

But there is something important in Jesus' teaching - the very last words of our reading. After the well-known promises, ask, search, knock, Jesus says this: "If you, then...know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask them!"

Notice what Jesus promises God will give in response to prayer! Not the specific thing we ask for, but rather, the Holy Spirit!

My own study of and struggle with prayer has led me to a belief, very closely related to my understanding of the concept of "God's will" (a topic I wrote on in this space previously),

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Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

supported by this and other Biblical statements - that prayer is a gift of God to God's own creatures - a gift of communication, of relationship, and an opportunity for teaching. A belief that God the Spirit uses prayer to lead us into a greater understanding of God themselves and our place in God's reign. That over time, our desires become God's desires - God's will - the things we want become aligned with the things of God through the Holy Spirit working through our prayers. And so, when so aligned, God does indeed grant our prayers as promised in these and other passages of Scripture - because what God wants has now become what we want.

Two extra-Biblical sources offer similar insight and have become consistent touchpoints in my life when considering prayer. C.S. Lewis is often attributed with saying, "Prayer does not change God, prayer changes me" (a similar quote, "Prayer does not change God, but it changes the one who prays," is attributed to Soren Kierkegaard - and it's very possible Lewis was sharing a learning of his own when making this statement).

And, in the book *Whole Prayer*, Walter Wangerin, Jr. teaches that prayer ought to be considered in four parts: (1) we pray, (2) God listens, (3) God speaks, and (4) we listen. He posits that we are very good at the first part and God never fails on their parts, but we often fail in our listening!

Please join me, dear friends, in practicing prayer in the way taught us by Jesus and supported by God's servants from whom we learn! May we all - individually and communally - find guidance, support, strength, wisdom, connection, and more through this remarkable gift from God.

- Jim Bargmann

Please Help!

Our hearts break anew with each update about the catastrophic flash floods in South Central Texas. We join the Rev. Sue Briner, bishop of the Southwestern Texas Synod, in her call to "**pray, pray, pray** for those who are still lost as well as the families of those who are lost, who have died, or who have experienced loss of home or property." Merciful God, hear our prayer.

The ELCA, through Lutheran Disaster Response, stands ready to walk with our neighbors in the Texas hill country as the floodwaters recede and communities begin to navigate life on the other side of this horrific flood. Lutheran Disaster Response is coordinating with the Southwestern Texas Synod and will work with other partners as well to respond to urgent needs, provide emotional and spiritual care, and support cleanup and long-term recovery.

The Mount Olive Global Ministry Committee has approved a \$2000 donation from the Global Ministry undesignated offerings for the relief effort. If you would like to make a personal donation, you can give through this [link](#) (be sure to choose Lutheran Disaster Response: U.S. Flooding from the drop down menu) or give via check through Mount Olive by designating your gift for "ELCA Flood Relief."



The Olive Branch

Calendar

Wednesday, July 16

10:00 am Staff meeting

Thursday, July 17

9:30 am Morning Prayer

7:00 pm MIRAC meeting

7:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

Friday, July 18

7:00 pm Movie Night

7:00 pm Recovery Group

Saturday, July 19

9:00 am Gardening Day

10:30 am Ciciotte/Senesky Funeral

Sunday, July 20 - Sixth Sunday of Pentecost

10:00 am Holy Eucharist, followed by reception for Interim Organist Robert Farlee

Monday, July 21

7:00 pm Monday Night WAVE (N.A.)

Tuesday, July 22

Noon Bible Study

Wednesday, July 23

10:00 am Funeral Visitation for Elizabeth Beissel

11:00 am Funeral Eucharist

Thursday, July 24

9:30 am Morning Prayer

7:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

Friday, July 25

7:00 pm Recovery Group

Sunday, July 27 - Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 am Holy Eucharist, with Reception of New Members, followed by coffee and conversation

Monday, July 28

7:00 pm Monday Night WAVE (N.A.)

Tuesday, July 29

Noon Bible Study

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 August 9, we will discuss, *The Covenant of Water*, by Abraham Verghese.

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](#).

Olive Branch Summer Publication

During the summer months, *The Olive Branch* is published every other week. Information for the next issue is due in to the church office **by Monday, July 28**, for publication on Wednesday, July 30.

Visiting in Solidarity

A number of you have asked: Is there still time to register for our **Walking With Our Palestinian Partners** trip in November? After meetings last week with Brights Stars representative Linda Edens and with Sami Khoury, our tour guide, two things became clear. First, right now visiting in Palestine and Israel is safe, though of course, flexibility is important for us, and Sami has years of experience in just such trips. Secondly, and more importantly, what our Palestine partners need most now is our support and solidarity. We need to “walk with” them, to let them know that they aren't forgotten. Both Linda and Sami spoke of the despair felt when it seems that the church has forgotten them, when it doesn't speak out for justice. Our presence is a powerful support.

For more information check out our brochure [here](#).



Piles of Weeds!

This is a photo of the piles from three mornings of gardening by 3 people -- a total of 20 hours of work this past week. It is a fraction of the weeds that are overtaking the gardens in the south parking lot. This work was mostly done by new recruits – Yahir and Daniela (Jose’s children.) They were able to make some money prior to going on vacation last week AND they want to come back and help.

Due to the rain and heat, every Saturday going forward is going to be a gardening day! As you can see -- there is plenty to do for all, so if possible, join us Saturday mornings at 9 am.



Coming and Going, All Celebrating – It's a Full Month!

Mount Olive has been and will be blessed by faithful servants among us and this summer we're celebrating with a number of them. Some are completing their time among us as staff and others are coming to begin their service. Mark your calendars, because starting July 20 there will be a lot of celebrations and thanksgivings!

- ◇ **July 20** – thanksgiving for *Robert Buckley Farlee's* ministry as interim organist this past year. We'll formally give thanks in our worship service and there will be a coffee hour/reception for him after worship.
- ◇ **August 3** – thanksgiving and farewell to *Vicar Natalie Summerville*. Natalie is completing her year with us as vicar, and this will be her last Sunday. We will wish her farewell and Godspeed during the liturgy and the Vicar Committee will host a reception for her after worship.
- ◇ **August 10** – welcome and installation of our new Cantor, *Daniel E. Schwandt*. Cantor Schwandt will begin his ministry as our fourth cantor on this Sunday and will be installed at the start of the liturgy and then lead us in our entrance hymn and begin his worship leadership among us. **Prelude:** there will be a festive prelude of about 20 minutes before the liturgy, led by members of Mount Olive and other familiar friends, in honor of Cantor Schwandt and giving thanks for his ministry to come. There will also be a reception for our new cantor and his spouse, Emily Bird, after worship.
- ◇ **August 17** – welcome and blessing of our new Vicar, *Erik Nelson*. Vicar Nelson will actually start during the preceding week, but we'll welcome him and commission his Vicar Committee at the liturgy, and yes, there will be a reception to welcome him after the worship.

This is one of the things we do well as a community of faith here, but it's a lot, so please make every effort to come for each of these to surround these faithful people with love and support and thanks.

July Neighborhood Ministry Partner of the Month

Every Meal

Every Meal seeks to fight child hunger through community and school partnerships. Their primary focus is providing food when children are not in school and lacking the school supplied meals many depend upon. Through their Weekend Meal Program, children in Pre-K through 8th grade experiencing food insecurity receive weekend food bags directly and discreetly in their backpacks at approximately 375 schools across Minnesota. A team of volunteers from Mount Olive, coordinated by Jerry Duncan, deliver meals every other week to students at Sullivan STEAM, a magnet school of the Minneapolis Public School District. We are currently exploring a deeper relationship with Every Meal that may result in more opportunities for Mount Olive volunteers to engage with this great organization.

For more information about Every Meal, please visit their website at www.everymeal.org.

School Supplies Drive

The [National Pan- Hellenic Council of Minneapolis](#) (Irene Campbell is a member of this organization) is holding a school supplies drive on August 16, from 9am-Noon. We can make a big difference in our community and in the lives of many students by donating school supplies.

Donations can be dropped off at church until August 10. A box will be available in the West Assembly Area to receive your school supplies donations.

The Neighborhood Ministry Committee and local students are grateful for your support. Please call Irene Campbell with any questions you may have (612-230-3927).

Funeral Help Requested on July 23

Kitchen help with food preparation, serving, and clean-up is needed next Wednesday, July 23, for Liz Beissel's funeral. If you're available to help anytime between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m., let Lora know at shared@mountolivechurch.org, or call her at 612-850-5562.



A Note of Thanks

Last February, we learned about the amazing work of our supported ministry partner in Chile, Educación Popular En Salud (EPES).

We were able to send over \$4500 to the organization from Mount Olive's 2025 budgeted donation and contributions to the Taste of Chile event.

Karen Anderson, a recently retired ELCA missionary who worked with EPES said this, "What an amazing surprise it was for all of us at EPES to receive the generous donations from the Taste of Chile event!! Thank you so much and to all the congregation for this incredibly kind and generous support for our work. In these complicated times, it is good to know we are part of a wider community of faith that continues to work for justice and dignity."

Click [here](#) to see the May, 2025 EPES update.



Mount Olive Lutheran Church

3045 Chicago Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55407

*A congregation of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

Summer Sunday Eucharist: 10 am

Contact Us:

Phone: 612/827-5919

Web: www.mountolivechurch.org

Staff

Pastor - *Joseph Crippen*

Interim Organist - *Robert Farlee*

Vicar - *Natalie Summerville*

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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