



The Olive Branch

May 13, 2026

Sunday Readings

May 17, 2026
*Seventh Sunday of
 Easter, year A*
 Acts 1:6-14
 Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35
 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11
 John 17:1-11

May 24, 2026
*Day of Pentecost,
 year A*
 Numbers 11:24-30
 Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
 Acts 2:1-21
 John 7:37-39

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

Accent on Worship

Pastor Joseph Crippen

Our Advantage

Tomorrow, on Thursday, we celebrate Jesus' ascension, forty days after his resurrection. In John, Jesus says a strange thing about this departure: "It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you." (16:7)

We often think it would have been better for Jesus to have stayed here, so we could see him in the flesh, like the women and men who followed him. But Jesus says we need the ascension. We need the risen Christ to return into the heart of the Triune Life, so he can keep his promise to be with us always (Matthew 28:20) and to send the Holy Spirit to transform us, as at Pentecost.

When Christ is no longer bound by human time and history, and is able to be fully within the song and work of the Triune God who transcends time and history, then Christ can be with us always. Present to all believers at all times. Met in the Meal of his body and blood. And in our hearts and lives in the Spirit.

Jesus' ascension completes the journey of the Son to come to us, show us how to love and live, and invite us back into the dance and song of God, to join earth and heaven together once more. So let us celebrate!

**The Ascension of Our Lord
Thursday, May 14 (tomorrow!)
Holy Eucharist at 7:00 p.m.
*All are welcome.***

**Vigil of Pentecost
Saturday, May 23
7:00 p.m.
*All are welcome.***

Bach Tage 2026: Saturday–Sunday, June 6–7

Mount Olive's annual Bach Tage is a unique opportunity to spend a weekend immersed in a J. S. Bach cantata, preparing and rehearsing from chorus to chorale on Saturday, then performing Bach's glorious music during Evening Prayer on Sunday.

This year's Bach Tage features *Es ist dir gesagt, Mensch, was gut ist* (BWV 45), based on Micah 6:8. We will also explore the work of J. S. Bach's elder cousin, Johann Christoph Bach, and his setting of the "Nunc dimittis," *Herr, nun lasset du deinen Diener*.

For more information and/or to register, visit <https://mountolivechurch.org/events/bach-tage/>

Final Adult Forum until Fall

May 17 – Updates from the Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly, presented by Greg Murphy.

Summer Schedule Approaches

Please note: Beginning Memorial Day weekend (Day of Pentecost, May 24), and running through Labor Day weekend (September 6), Mount Olive will celebrate ONE Sunday Eucharist at 10:00 a.m.

Beginning with the June 3 issue and running through the summer months, *The Olive Branch* will be published every other week.

An Invitation from the Thompson family

The Mount Olive congregation has played such an important role in Rose's life, so we wish to extend an open invitation to celebrate her graduation from Richfield High School. Please join us for an open house on Saturday, May 30, from 1:00 - 4:00 at 7040 Lyndale Ave S., Richfield.

We hope to see you there.

- Ted & Amy Thompson

The Olive Branch

Calendar

Wednesday, May 13

- 9:00 am Staff meeting
6:00 pm Education Committee meeting
7:00 pm Y3 Confirmation

Thursday, May 14 - Ascension of Our Lord

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

Friday, May 15

- 7:00 pm Minneapolis Choir Collective Concert
7:00 pm Recovery group

Saturday, May 16

- 9:00 am Gardening Day

Sunday, May 17 - Seventh Sunday of Easter, year A

- 8:00 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee and conversation
9:30 am Godly Play/Youth Discussion/Adult Forum
10:45 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee and conversation

Monday, May 18

- 6:30 pm Recorder group
7:00 pm Monday Night WAVE (N.A.)

Tuesday, May 19

- Noon Bible Study
5:00 pm Neighborhood Ministry Committee meeting
6:30 pm Feminine Divine group
7:00 pm Choir group

Attention Worship Assistants!

The Mount Olive Servant Schedule for **2026 Quarter 3 (July - September)** will be published in June.

Please send any scheduling preferences and dates you will be unavailable to me by **Friday, May 22.**

Please let me know any questions you have. Thank you -

- Greg Murphy gregRmurphy@gmail.com

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 our June reading we will move back to the United States for *Plainsong* by Kent Haruf, a story of four generations set in Colorado.

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.](#)



Godly Play This Week

This Sunday we will have our last Godly Play session of the season in each circle with a joint feast celebration downstairs. Parents and siblings are welcome to join us. The following week, May 25, begins our summer schedule with one worship at 10:00 and no Godly Play sessions for the summer. We hope to see you all this summer in worship, and many thanks for a good Godly Play year.

Choir School News

Our wonderful year of growing in faith through music is coming to a close. Please note our final special events and join the singing children and youth of Mount Olive.

Choir School singers and their families (siblings, parents, grandparents, baptismal sponsors, etc.) are warmly welcomed to our Family Choir. We will eat dinner and rehearse just once on Wednesday, May 27, 5:30 meal and 6:00-6:45 rehearsal. We will sing for the 10:00 am liturgy on Sunday, May 31, Holy Trinity Sunday. Please contact Mari mari.mt.olive@gmail.com if you have questions or would like a preview of the music we will be singing.

Pentecost Reading of Acts 2 in Many Languages

For a number of years, it has been our tradition at Mount Olive to hear a portion of the Pentecost reading from Acts 2:1-21 read simultaneously in various languages.

Some of you have either participated in this joint reading in the past or are knowledgeable enough in a foreign language that you might be willing to participate this year. Anyone who can read aloud in another language is invited to participate in this corporate reading at the morning liturgy on Sunday, May 24.

If you are interested in participating this year, please contact Andrew Stoebig (worship@mountolivechurch.org).

Greeters at Parish House Door

We are looking for folks who would like to serve occasionally on Sunday mornings as a greeter at the Parish House door. Ideally, a greeter would sit near the Parish House entrance to welcome folks as they enter, starting around 30 minutes prior to the worship service. If you are interested in serving this way, please sign up at the link: <https://forms.gle/DvX8dEob7KjHuNPy6>

When we have a pool of folks who are willing to serve, we will contact you with more details. Questions? Please email Tricia at hospitality@mountolivechurch.org.

NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG SINGERS: NATIONAL LUTHERAN CHILDREN'S CHOIR

About the [National Lutheran Children's Choir](#)

The National Lutheran Children's Choir is a place where young singers ages 7-14* grow musically in a supportive environment. Using sacred choral music as a foundation, singers develop healthy vocal technique, music literacy, and ensemble skills while building confidence and growing in community. No prior experience is required – students are met where they are and guided forward with care and intention.

**on or before September 10, 2026*

Rehearsals (Starting September 2026)

Sundays, 4:30–6:00 PM - [Immanuel Lutheran Church \(Snelling Ave\), St. Paul](#)

Vocal Assessments (Not an audition)

All singers participate in a short, welcoming assessment so we can get to know how they engage with music. There is nothing to prepare, and the environment is relaxed and encouraging.

Upcoming dates:

Thursday, May 28 (4:30–6:30 PM)

Sunday, May 31 (2:00–4:00 PM)

Location: [Normandale Lutheran Church \(Edina\)](#)

(Additional August dates will be announced; all assessments are by appointment.)

Register for a vocal assessment here: [LINK](#)

Learn More / Sign Up

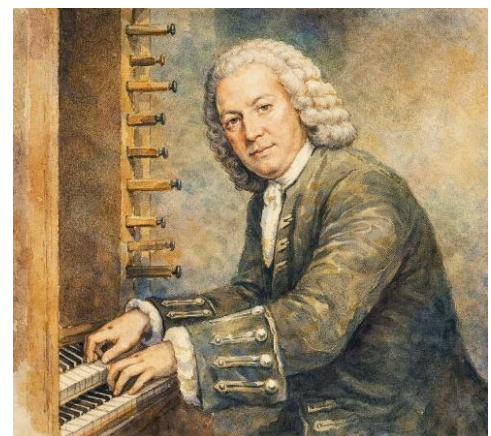
Families can learn more and register for a vocal assessment here:

www.nlca.com/childrens-choir



Performance of Bach's Mass in B Minor

Johann Sebastian Bach's monumental choral work will be performed by the Exultate Festival Chorus and Orchestra this coming weekend at three different venues. Mount Olive member Mark Spitzack is singing with the choir. Tickets and more information is available at <https://exultate.org>.



May Neighborhood Ministry Partner of the Month: *Minnesota Council of Churches*

Minnesota Council of Churches seeks to “build strong communities that are made up of meaningful relationships and guided by our deepest values. They seek to partner organizations and individuals to live out faith in their communities. They do this through refugee services programs, social justice work, justice advocacy work, and fostering interfaith connections. In addition, through their Respectful Conversations program, they facilitate respectful conversations between people of varying backgrounds and train others to lead those conversations.

Mount Olive supports each of our Partners of the Month through a yearly contribution from our budget, and often, like our partners this month, we also volunteer in support of their work. On top of those financial and volunteer 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 the Minnesota Council of Churches, please visit their website at www.mnchurches.org.

Life is Better in a Garden

And life in that garden is now possible since we just turned over the calendar pages to May. Thanks to Leanna Kloempken for this perspective.

“After the puzzles and historical facts booklets galore, I am convinced we are cheeriest now because - Life is better in a Garden!”

Come and join other Mount Olive members who are experiencing the joy of our gardens.

The crew meets every two weeks on Saturday mornings at 9:00 am. The dates are:

May 16, 30

June 13, 27

July 11, 25

August 8, 22

September 5, 19

October 3, 17, and 31 - fall cleanup and winter prep



Mount Olive Needs Your Help

The Shared Ministry Committee has promised to keep the congregation informed about our finances. Unfortunately, the current situation is not optimal. April giving was far below what is needed, and, added to the previous months' shortfall, the result is an operating deficit of over \$50,000 year-to-date in 2026. This means that in order to pay our bills, we were forced to dip into our line of credit, which is a loan that needs to be repaid at 7% interest.

We are asking that our Mount Olive family consider carefully how they can increase the resources that they share to help us eliminate this deficit, especially as we head into the summer months when giving has typically been lower.

Here are some suggestions:

- Make a gift of any amount to the general budget, in the offering plate, online, or mailed to the church office.
- Consider a "13th month" strategy. If you give a set amount every month, make an extra gift of that amount within the next few weeks.
- If you save your financial support to Mount Olive until the end of the year, please consider a gift now. If we fall behind during the year, we need to borrow from our line of credit, which comes with a hefty interest rate.
- If you give through Vanco, have you adjusted the amount that you give to reflect the nearly 10% increase in our budget this year? Could you increase that amount?

This is our current financial reality. Ours is not an extravagant budget. The vast majority of it goes to pay our staff, keep our building in top shape, pay our utility bills, and serve our neighbors. Please prayerfully consider sharing an extra gift to erase this deficit and watch for updates as we move through the year.

Convention Delegate?

Are you or someone you know serving as a delegate or alternate for either the DFL or GOP State Conventions happening at the end of May? If so, several of our partner organizations have shared some valuable information with us regarding policy and platform priorities. We would love to share this information with you, but we need to know who you are! Please email Jim Bargmann at neighborhood@mountolivechurch.org if you are serving in either of these roles.

Celebrate with Me!

As you all know by now, I'm retiring at the end of June this year. I've asked that there be no retirement celebration at church - instead, I would like to invite you all to an open house-type of celebration on **Sunday, June 28**, at [Bauhaus BrewLabs](#) in NE Minneapolis. I'll be there from 12:30-3 pm if you'd like to stop by.

This is a low-key, no-pressure sort of gathering by design. Come if you can and don't worry if you can't. More info to come.

- Cha Posz

2026 Graduates – Who Are They?

As we come to the completion of the school year, the Mount Olive community would like to take time to recognize the accomplishments of our graduates (high school, college, grad school, etc.) and celebrate the next steps of their journey.

Our Graduate Recognition will take place on **Sunday, June 7**, and they will be named in prayer at the morning Eucharist and greeted at the coffee hour after the Eucharist. If your Mount Olive graduate graduates this spring, please email the following information to Cha in the Mount Olive office (welcome@mountolivechurch.org): Graduate name, the school they are graduating from, any special recognitions or honors, and what they are planning to do next, whether that be job, more education, or something else.

Please invite them to be here on June 7!

You're Invited!

All are invited to attend a panel discussion on Thursday, May 14, 7 pm, sponsored by Bright Stars of Bethlehem entitled "Illusions of Peace," featuring Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb, Founder and President of Dar al-Kalima University in Palestine.

This panel discussion will be held at Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis, and pre-registration is required.

For more information, visit <https://tinyurl.com/illusionsofpeace>.

Thanksgiving: gifted pianos grace our life together

Recently two pianos have been given to Mount Olive and our life together.

Andrew and Sarah Stoebig have given a piano for the Undercroft, for use in congregational meetings and other gatherings (and already well-used by youth choir members before choir on Wednesdays!) This piano is given in loving memory of Ruth and Gunnar Johnson, who were members of the congregation Andrew grew up in. In his elementary or middle-school years, they gave Andrew their Everett piano, as their children who played had long grown up and moved out. It was his practice instrument for many years.

Marjorie Shifflet has given her Kawai piano for the Chapel Lounge, for all the uses that we have in our gatherings there (including last week's annual Mother's Day recital). Marge was an elementary school music teacher for decades. She got this piano in 1972, taught piano lessons on it for 25 or more years, and derived great pleasure from playing it, including for and with her children and grandchildren, for all those years.

Both of these instruments will be blessings to us, and we are deeply grateful for the gift of them. When you have a chance, sit down and play one of them and find out for yourself! Many, many thanks to Andrew and Sarah and Marge for these generous gifts.

Mount Olive Lutheran Church

3045 Chicago Avenue
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*A congregation of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

Sunday Eucharists: 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*

Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry –

Jim Bargmann

Administrative Assistant – *Cha Posz*

*Mount Olive is a Reconciling in Christ
congregation.*

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