The Olive Branch

July 17, 2026

Sunday Readings

July 19, 2026
Eighth Sunday after Pentecost, Lect. 16 A
Isaiah 44:6-8
Psalm 86:11-17
Romans 8:12-25
Matthew 13:24-30

July 26, 2026
Ninth Sunday after Pentecost, Lect. 17 A
1 Kings 3:5-12
Psalm 119:129-136
Romans 8:26-39
Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

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

Accent on Worship

Jim Bargmann

I Keep Running into that Font!

Toward the end of the Easter season, when our baptismal font was placed in the front of the nave, a friend and fellow member of our community, bumped into that same font when we approached one another to share greetings of peace. Their response? "I keep running into that font! I suppose that's a good thing."

Indeed.

For many of us, at our first encounter with the font, this prayer was prayed over us:

"We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give your children new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise them to eternal life. Sustain your child with the gift of your Holy Spirit; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

We have been given the gift of being able to "run into that font" anytime.

The times when we need sustenance. The times when we need wisdom and understanding about what we are encountering and experiencing and how to respond. The times when we need counsel from God themselves. The times when we need the strength only God can give. The times when we need to know and experience God's very presence and find the joy in that presence.

(continued on page 3)

Calendar

Friday, July 17
7:00 p.m. Recovery Group
Saturday, July 18

Sunday, July 19 – Eighth Sunday after Pentecost, Lect. 16 A
9:00 a.m. Summer Tenor/Bass Choir Rehearsal
10:00 a.m. ***Holy Eucharist,*** followed by coffee and conversation
Monday, July 20
6:00 p.m. Vicar Committee Meeting
6:30 p.m. Recorder Group
7:00 p.m. Monday Night WAVE (N.A.)
Tuesday, July 21
5:00 p.m. Neighborhood Ministry Committee Meeting
Wednesday, July 22
10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting
12:00 p.m. Bible Study **(meeting on Wed. in the summer)**
1:00 p.m. Synod Event: Global Partnership Leaders
Thursday, July 23
9:30 a.m. ***Morning Prayer***
7:00 p.m. Narcotics Anonymous
Friday, July 24
7:00 p.m. Recovery Group
Saturday, July 25
9:00 a.m. Gardening Day
Sunday, July 26 – Ninth Sunday after Pentecost, Lect. 17 A
10:00 a.m. ***Holy Eucharist,*** followed by coffee and conversation
11:30 a.m. Community Well-Being Committee Meeting
Monday, July 27
7:00 p.m. Monday Night WAVE (N.A.)
Wednesday, July 29
10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting
12:00 p.m. Bible Study **(meeting on Wed. in the summer)**
1:00 p.m. Olive Branch Submission Deadline
Thursday, July 30
9:30 a.m. Morning Prayer
7:00 p.m. Narcotics Anonymous
Friday, July 31
7:00 a.m. Olive Branch Published
7:00 p.m. Recovery Group

Wednesday Noon Bible Study Link

The Wednesday 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 Wednesday noon Bible study will be the same every week. To join from your computer, tablet, or smartphone, **click here.**

Book Discussion

On August 8 we will hear from Palestinian author Susan Abulhawa in her book ***Mornings in Jenin*** as she follows a family through the years in Palestine. Then as we move into the fall we will read ***Winter in the Blood*** by James Welch for our September 12 gathering. It is set at Fort Belknap Reservation in Montana. An October book has been chosen as well, ***Lost Horizon*** by James Hilton.

Everyone is invited to join whenever you are able, at 10:00 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.**

Neighborhood Ministries 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.

Please see the note from Jerry on **page 4** about opportunities to connect with the Mount Olive team working with Every Meal.

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

The Olive Branch Summer Publication Schedule

During the summer months, the *Olive Branch* is published every other week on **Friday**.
The next issue will be Friday, July 31. The submission deadline is **1:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 29**.

Accent on Worship *(continued from page 1)*

Running into the font, or perhaps more accurately, the waters contained within, can be a regular occurrence – not simply a one-time thing. After all, it is at our baptism that we were called child of God and it was declared that we had been "sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever." It was proclaimed who we are and to whom we belong. And all the gifts of God's work in our baptism are ours not only on that day but forever.

So, enjoy running into that font. Perhaps not always literally. It is a good thing.

Unclaimed Sheet Cake – Is It Yours?

There is an unclaimed full sheet cake in the Undercroft kitchen. It has been there for at least three weeks and takes up *much needed* space for the weekly food distribution. If this is yours, please remove, share, or dispose of it as soon as possible. Thank you.

Every Meal - Volunteers Needed

Twice a month Mount Olive participates in the Every Meal program on Thursdays at a south Minneapolis school. This is an important program as it helps fight food insecurity that school-aged children face, especially on the weekends. With Weekend Meal Program, we discreetly place bags full
of nutritious and relevant food into the students' backpacks. It is a fun and fulfilling event to take part in, not only because we are helping children have food, especially with all the cuts to SNAP, but we get to see the joy of the students as they go through the hallways.

Though we do this activity twice a month, this is a 1.5-hour commitment on Thursday mornings, starting at 10:00 am, only once a month. If you are interested in joining this fulfilling effort, please reach out to Jerry Duncan to learn more or give your name to the church office. We will start up again with the program in the Fall of 2026.

Opportunities to Serve on the Neighborhood Ministry Team

We are looking to add people to two of the teams serving in Neighborhood Ministry.

Diaper Depot Driver
We could use at least one more driver for the Diaper Depot to lighten the load on our existing drivers. Each driver delivers diapers to between 4-6 families each week on Wednesday afternoons. Routes are planned to minimize the distance between each stop.

Neighborhood Ministry Host
We would like to add to our core of servants working with our neighborhood ministry guests during the week. We have a wonderful group of people that allows us to have 2-3 people here for the times we are open, but it often gets busy and adding to this team would be a great help. Neighborhood Ministry hosts serve from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. Most servants choose one of those days – and although some choose to work more than one – there is no expectation that anyone serve more than one day a week. A Neighborhood Ministry Host serves by greeting our guests, assisting them with bus cards, laundry vouchers, obtaining vital records, and listening to guests' stories. Training and mentorship with current hosts will be provided for anyone wanting to serve.

Contact Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry Jim Bargmann (neighborhood@mountolivechurch.org) if you are interested in either.

Gardening Days at Mount Olive

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 a.m. for weeding and yard maintenance. The dates are:

- July 25
- August 8, 22
- September 5, 19
- October 3, 17, and 31 - fall cleanup and winter prep

Our Going Out and Our Coming In

Staff Vacation Schedules

Pastor Crippen is on vacation June 29-July 23.
Jim Bargmann is on vacation July 17-24.
Cantor Schwandt will be on vacation August 24 – September 2.

Sacred Space, Singing Space

The north transept has become a little crowded in recent years. Storing our piano and harpsichord in the same space as our columbarium limits the physical space available for internment liturgies, smaller services, and personal prayer. To help alleviate this confinement, the worship and property committees will be undertaking a small renovation project this summer.

Over the course of the next few weeks, the pews and modesty screen will be removed from the south transept and placed in storage. Then, the piano and harpsichord will be moved from the north transept to the south transept. The chairs that were removed from the north transept following the expansion of the columbarium will be restored to both transepts to allow for seating during liturgies and at other times. Additional chairs may be acquired at a later date as need arises.

This project has a few added benefits as well. Nothing will be thrown out, so pew hardware from the south transept can be used to repair and replace ailing parts in the nave. The south transept also offers more flexible space for musicians during liturgies, concerts, and at other times. And everything can be restored if we discern in the future that some or all pews are needed again in the south transept. We may even find other uses for the south transept in the future as we discern God's good and gracious will.

Questions, comments, and other feedback is always welcome. Contact Andrew Stoebig at worship@mountolivechurch.org or 763-221-5612.

Help with Live Streaming

We are in need of a couple more helpers to run the live stream during worship. You'll need to be comfortable using a computer, and to follow along with the liturgy to switch cameras in response to what's happening where.

What you'll do as a live streamer: Get situated at the computer in the South Gallery and start the live stream a few minutes before the prelude begins. Follow along with the liturgy, and when we come to a transition point (examples: a reader walks to the lectern, or a hymn is about to begin), you press a couple buttons to switch to the correct camera, move camera positions, and/or display overlay slides with music on them.

Training sessions and written directions are available. An experienced streamer will sit by you and assist you for your first services. How to get involved: Contact Dan Hellerich at streaming@mountolivechurch.org or 612-600-6982 to learn more. Or, please visit with any of us after liturgy for a couple minutes to see how it all works in the South Gallery.

Disaster Relief – Earthquakes in Venezuela

The Mount Olive Global Ministry Committee has approved a $2000 donation to Lutheran World Relief from the Global Ministry undesignated offerings for the relief effort following the earthquakes in Venezuela. The devastation from two back-to-back earthquakes that struck Venezuela on June 24 is enormous. The earthquakes that have killed many people and many more are missing. They also caused collapsed buildings, damaged infrastructure and power outages. LWR has mobilized response teams to provide emergency aid, like water, medical care, shelter and essential supplies, to our neighbors facing some of the darkest moments of their lives.

Please keep the people of Venezuela and the emergency response teams in your prayers. If you would like to make a personal donation, you can give through this link or give via check through Mount Olive by designating your gift for "Venezuelan earthquake relief".

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

St John's Bible Tour Update

On Tuesday several of us traveled to St John's to check out the "lay of the land" and confirm details of our visit on Wednesday, August 12. I am looking forward to the trip and I hope all of those who signed up will be equally impressed. The cost of our tour is $75.00 per person. That includes bus travel, lunch and gratuity for the Bible Tour docent. Please make your check out to Mount Olive Lutheran Church and in the memo write "St John's Tour". Leave your check in the church office or give it to Paul Nixdorf. Please do not put it in the Sunday offering plate. Your check will be held up due to the church counter's schedule.

We still have an opening for 1 more person on our tour. If you would like to join us, please call or email Amy in the church office or call or email Paul Nixdorf at 612-206-0055, pn@paulnixdorf.com.

Blessings,
Paul Nixdorf

DHH Partnership Food Delivery Program Update

Our partnership with DHH (Dios Habla Hoy) Church continues to support many families in our Mount Olive neighborhood. We've been pretty consistently able to deliver 70 boxes of food, along with diapers and formula each week, for about 7 months. We started this work towards the beginning of the Metro Surge crisis. The crisis has diminished and DHH Church has about half the number of families requesting help than during the height of the crisis. We're not sure how long DHH Church will continue to need community partners like us to deliver food, but we hope to continue partnering with them as long as we have enough people able to support this work and they have the need for this type of assistance.

In June, we quoted an article about the struggle of many families in Minnesota to fund their basic needs. Recognizing this significant challenge for many of our neighbors and with DHH Church's supplies and support, we see a reason and way to continue our partnership with DHH on the neighborhood food delivery program.

From Michael Tankenoff, executive director of Loaves & Fishes: "According to the United Way's latest research, 35% of Minnesota households are living below the threshold for financial stability. That includes families living in poverty, but also thousands of households earning above the poverty level while remaining unable to cover the basic costs. The same research found that 1 in 4 workers in Minnesota's most common jobs live in households where income does not cover the cost of essentials."

DHH Church has connections to food banks and donors. They provide boxes of food, extra items to add, and diapers. They no longer receive donations for baby formula, wipes, and adult incontinence products, so we've been purchasing formula and adult incontinence products for families on our weekly list requesting those items. We've been using Neighborhood Support Funds. The cost for this has been averaging about $350-400 per week. We appreciate people's generous support for this fund! Additionally, we recognize the challenge of continuing to ask for funds for a program that has an uncertain end date. This same fund supports our own Mount Olive food delivery program and the occasional rental assistance request for those families still struggling to get back on their feet.

If you are able to contribute to this continued work, you can indicate "Neighbor Support 2026" on any physical donations given or use this link to do so electronically.

Save the Date

Mount Olive Church Picnic at Minnehaha Falls Wabun shelter C on **Sunday, August 23, after church until 3:00 pm.**

Details to follow!

Mount Olive & Grace Lutheran Churches Partner for Pride 2026

The Hospitality Committee and the Justice Ministry Committee worked together to host a booth with Grace Lutheran Church at this year's Pride Festival in Loring Park on Saturday, June 27. We want to extend our appreciation to Vicar Erik for connecting us with Grace Lutheran Church in NE Minneapolis!

We enjoyed getting to know some of Grace's members while learning how they've organized their booth and created engaging art projects. Several staff and congregation members volunteered for shifts at the booth. We didn't have time to get individualized T-shirts for Mount Olive, but Emily Bird came up with a great design for a T-shirt iron-on that some volunteers used.

Being at the booth was a great opportunity to share some information about Mount Olive and connect with many people over the art project. The art project involved people writing their wishes and dreams for the future on strips of different colored cloth. They then tied these to panels with wooden framed chicken wire. There was a smaller version for Mount Olive. The results were lovely combinations of multi-colored wishes fluttering in the wind, which you can see displayed in the west assembly at Mount Olive.

An independent reporter for MPR took these photos of the art project. Chandler Molbert and Tricia Van Ee wore T-shirts with Emily's design at the Mount Olive Lutheran and Grace Lutheran Pride booth.

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A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Sunday Eucharist: 10:00 a.m.

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Pastor – *Joseph Crippen*
Cantor – *Daniel Schwandt*
Vicar – *Eric Nelson*
Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry – *Jim Bargmann*
Office Administrator – *Amy Thompson*

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