

The Olive Branch

October 23, 2026

Sunday Readings

October 25, 2026
Reformation Sunday, Lect. 30 A
Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18
Psalm 1
1 Thessalonians 2:1-8
Matthew 22:34-46

November 1, 2026
All Saints Day
Revelation 7:9-17
Psalm 34:1-10, 22
1 John 3:1-3
Matthew 5:1-12

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

Accent on Worship — Pastor Crippen

Dare

"From that day [no one] dared to ask him any more questions." That's how our Gospel reading ends Sunday, with Jesus' opponents silenced by his rabbinical wisdom.

What a sad place to be found in, afraid to ask Jesus any questions. Can you imagine?

Well, maybe you can. My experience is that we often feel as if we can't challenge God, or criticize what we perceive as God's action or inaction. I've had too many conversations with people afraid to ask God any questions, as if somehow that wasn't allowed, to think that we're much bolder than the Pharisees.

Their problem was they were trying to test Jesus, trap Jesus. They weren't interested in real answers to their real questions. Jesus outsmarted them and they clammed up. They "didn't dare" because they knew he'd best them again publicly and they didn't want the embarrassment of that.

But you have nothing to fear. Jesus is the face of the Triune God for us in the world and that face is one of love and grace and invitation. In the Gospels, Jesus is always eager to have conversations with any who wish to talk to him, even those who challenge him, ask hard questions, even question his judgment.

As long as you're honestly looking for answers from God, dare to ask. "Do not dare not to dare," as C. S. Lewis once wrote. You are loved, and your questions are safe. And together, as a family in Christ, we will help each other not only question but listen for God's answers.





A Good Ol' Potluck – This Sunday!

Dig out your church cookbooks … it's time for a Mount Olive potluck!

The congregation is invited to a potluck lunch following the second service on **October 25** in conjunction with the semi-annual congregational meeting. Bring your food to the Undercroft kitchen before the 10:45 liturgy. The Hospitality Committee will be available to facilitate refrigerator space or outlets for crock pots. See you there!"

Names of the Departed Saints Invited

As part of our All Saints liturgy on Sunday, November 1, worshippers are invited to submit the names of loved ones who have died in the past year, since last All Saints Sunday, who were not members of Mount Olive. Members of the parish who have died are always named.

For those who attend worship in the coming weeks, a book is located at the entrance to the nave where you can write these names. You may also contact the church office with the names. These other names submitted will be included in the prayers of intercession.

Please keep this to just those who have died this past year, so we can have a more manageable list.



Former Vicar Nelson to be ordained here October 31

Our vicar from last year, Erik Nelson, has received a call to Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Rochester, Minnesota. (It will be easy for him to remember the name!)

Erik will be ordained into the ministry of Word and Sacrament in the ELCA on Saturday, October 31, at 11:00 a.m. in a Eucharist at Mount Olive, with Bishop Regina Hassanally of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod presiding.

All are welcome, and there will be refreshments following. Clergy are invited to vest in red if they wish to process with the others.

Thanks be to God for this new pastor for our church, and for the gift that Erik will be to the people of Rochester!

Fall Pledge Drive: Connected in Faith, Serving Together

Remember these words, because you're going to see and hear them a lot in the next few weeks: *Connected in Faith, Serving Together*. It's the theme of Mount Olive's fall pledge drive for giving in 2027.

It is *not* hyperbole to say that our beloved Mount Olive is facing a serious income-expenditure gap. Why? We all know about "price at the pump" and that almost everything seems to cost more. But on the revenue side the problem is more specific to us. For at least five years our giving has lagged expenditures. Based on that history, the proposed budget for 2027 assumes income of $887,000 and expenses of $916,000, for a projected deficit of $29,000.

Current-year giving now lags expenses by almost $100,000. Let's hope and pray that generous hearts will erase or significantly reduce that figure by December 31.

Some might argue—and indeed they have—that giving to Mount Olive is solely between God and me. You could argue, maybe with some merit, that we've been too cautious in asking for the dollars needed to support our worship and our local and global human services. We don't hire outside consultants to rally the faithful to increase giving. We've said we're okay with a pledge, "estimate of giving," or neither of those. Have we been doing financial "stewardship lite"?

Call it old fashioned, but we're calling it a pledge drive. Pledge cards, current-year statements, and supportive materials will be distributed at the October semi-annual meeting. We'll have an "in-gathering of pledge cards" during the liturgies on November 15.

Not alone but *together* we'll fund our worship and our local and global ministries and human services.



Can You Help a Fellow Member with Tech Issues?

The proliferation of technology like smart phones, tablets, and computers can be a blessing. For some, it can be a challenge to keep up with the changes, sort out difficulties that emerge, and handle problems.

From time to time there are members who could use someone with patience and skills to sit down with them and troubleshoot some problem or issue that they're having with tech. We have one such member now, but there will be others.

If you've got the ability and interest to offer a little time to a sibling in this congregation, please let Pr. Crippen know. He'll keep a short list for when someone asks for help. And if you can help someone right now, please say so, as he's looking for a connector for a member.

Get to Know Our Neighbors – Seeking Greeters

Neighborhood Ministry is seeking additional folks to join a fantastic team of greeters to welcome neighbors and connect them with the services Mount Olive provides. This includes using a computer to issue bus cards, completing paperwork to issue laundry or ID vouchers, and setting out coffee and refreshments. It is a vital, fulfilling, and lively role to serve others one-on-one.

Our ministry is open Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.. Volunteers typically assist one or more of those days from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.. We are especially in need of help on Mondays, but welcome assistance whenever you have availability. Training will be provided.

Please reach out to Jim Bargmann (Neighborhood@mountolivechurch.org) if you are open to this role or have any questions.

4th Annual Lefse Baking!



The 4th annual lefse baking event will take place on **Saturday, November 7**, beginning at 9:00 a.m. in the Undercroft.

Please bring your prepared potatoes and any equipment you may have as well as quart size storage bags and extra flour. We'll finish up by 1pm.

Contact Marsha Johnson to RSVP or ask any questions at mejohnson56@yahoo.com or 763-843-7024.

To Remember is to Begin - A Concert of Remembrance.

Join the National Lutheran Choir under Artistic Director Jennaya Robison for To Remember is to Begin: A Concert of Remembrance at St. Philip the Deacon Lutheran Church in Plymouth and St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Mahtomedi.

Featuring Leonard Bernstein's beloved Chichester Psalms, the concert also includes works by composers Hyo-Won Woo, Kim Andre Arnesen, Paul Christiansen, Edgar Bainton, Undine Smith Moore, and Kyle Pederson.

Audience members are invited to remember and celebrate the saints in their own lives by submitting the names of loved ones, both newly born and recently passed, to be incorporated into the concert.

Dates & Location:
7:30 p.m. - Friday**, October 30** at St. Philip the Deacon Lutheran Church, Plymouth, Minnesota
4:00 p.m. - Sunday, **November 1** at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, Mahtomedi, Minnesota
*Livestream available at NLCA.com

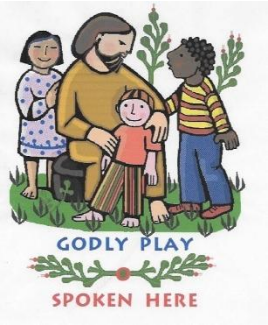
Tickets at NLCA.com.
Groups of 10 or more receive discounted tickets. Call 612-722-2301 for info on group rates.

Footsteps of Paul Trip

Some folks who traveled to Palestine last year are planning a trip to Greece and Turkey next September and would like to invite you along. This is not a church sponsored trip, but rather a group of people who simply like to learn and experience more.

Sami Khoury, the wonderful guide who led us through Palestine and Israel is offering this trip through his travel agency and will be our guide. The trip is planned for September 13-22, 2027 and includes three a three-day cruise to visit some of the significant islands. The travel brochure at https://sacredtravelpaths.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/STP-097-Tour-Brochure-Mt.-Olive-Friends-Greece-2027-Final.pdf provides more information including the registration page.

It looks to be a wonderful trip, but registration is limited. If you have questions please contact either Judy Hinck (judyhinck@gmail.com) or Jim Johnson(jimjudyjake@comcast.net).



Godly Play

This Sunday, October 25, the Godly Play circles will join with the Adult Forum to write letters and draw pictures to encourage and support the Common Hope students that each circle prays for and supports.

First we will learn more about Common Hope, then Circle 1 will encourage Caleb and Circle 2 will write to Leticia. The confirmation classes will also attend and write notes. The adults will write to encourage students who do not have sponsors. Parents should join their children as together we learn more about Common Hope and their students.

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

Upcoming Sunday Adult Forum Topics

October 25: Common Hope

The Global Ministry committee invites you to learn more about the work of Common Hope from Suntina Spehar, Outreach and Community Engagement Manager. We will also be writing "Hola Amigo" (Hi Friend) letters of encouragement to students in Guatemala who are not receiving letters from sponsors. Mount Olive youth will be there writing letters and drawing pictures to the Guatemalan students they are connected with through Global Kid Connections.

November 1: Women of the Cloth: Female Fiber Artists in the Book of Acts

Presented by Vicar Emily Hagen. This forum draws on the book of Acts to celebrate three women whose textile work helped share the Gospel message and contributed to the well-being of their early Christian communities in both material and spiritual ways. It also lifts up several ways that fiber arts continue to help us care for one another, profess our beliefs expressively, and deepen our devotional lives. (Includes interactive and fiber arts display elements.)

Where, Oh Where Can They Be???



Two moving carts belonging to Mount Olive like the one in the photo have been missing for several weeks. Thorough searches of the building have been conducted to no avail.

They are missed by all those who use them on a regular basis.
If you have knowledge of where they may be hiding at the church, please let Office Administrator Amy know their whereabouts by phone or email.

If you have borrowed them for a project at home and just not gotten around to returning them, this is encouragement to do so as soon as possible.

Election and Voting Information

The Justice Committee is committed to providing voters with the knowledge needed to prepare for and participate in the upcoming mid-term elections on Tuesday, November 3.
Here are some steps you can take:

- Learn about your rights and where and how to vote at Voting Rights Facts.
- Visit the Minnesota Voting Information Portal where you can enter your address to find important voting information for your precinct.
- V**ote Early** and encourage others to do the same.
    - Beginning October 17, Minneapolis will have two main early voting sites and multiple pop up sites:
        - One Day Early Voting Options in Minneapolis.
        - North Minneapolis. Vote Early Location & Schedule
        - South Minneapolis Early Vote Location & Schedule
    - St. Paul and suburbs also have early voting sites

Help with Voting
We're organizing rides to voting sites for Mount Olive members, either early or on election day and seeking drivers to assist with this. We're also partnering with Dios Habla Hoy Church to drive people that request help with getting to voting sites.

If you need help getting to a voting site voting site or are able to provide rides, please sign-up using this link as soon as you can so we can prepare.

Email justice@mountolivechurch.org if you have any questions.

Why I Have Hope

Common Hope (Familias de Esperanza in Spanish) is one of Mount Olive's supported Global Ministry partners. They work in over 35 communities helping nearly 10,000 impoverished children and adults create a better life for themselves. Their programs in education, health care, housing, and family development are offered through four main locations: Antigua, San Miguel Milpas Altas, San Rafael, and New Hope.



The previous three articles have featured student sponsorship and how we have connected with specific students and their families. In addition to the many students who have sponsors, there are 1,300 students who are receiving support through the Pathway program. The Pathway supports students using an unrestricted giving model which gives the team in Guatemala the resources needed to support each student on a case-by-case basis.

This is why we have hope.



There is a Pathway of Dreams at the site in Guatemala made of bricks with the names of Common Hope students who have graduated from high school. Younger students new to Common Hope also walk the Pathway, receiving encouragement and inspiration from those before them. Find out more about becoming a Pathway member.



This Sunday, **October 25**, Mount Olive adults and youth will be learning more about Common Hope and participating in writing letters of encouragement to students in Guatemala. Please join us at the education hour!

Neighborhood Ministries Partner of the Month: Central Lutheran Restoration Center

The Restoration Center at Central Lutheran provides a drop-in center for people in and around downtown Minneapolis experiencing homelessness and economic insecurity. They provide emergency rental assistance, meals, free-use computers, and a place for people to gather for community and support. Their Free Store provides clothing and household goods in a store-like environment and a partnership with Augsburg University provides free, low barrier healthcare.

Mount Olive has chosen to support each of our Partners of the Month through a yearly contribution from our budget, and often, 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 the Central Lutheran Restoration Center please visit their website at www.centralmpls.org/community/restorationcenter.

Noon Bible Study Link

The Noon Bible Study meets Tuesdays 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 Noon Bible study will be the same every week. To join from your computer, tablet, or smartphone, **click here.**



Gardening Day at Mount Olive

The crew meets for the final time this year on Saturday, **October 31** at 9:00 a.m.

Book Discussion

On **November 14** the book *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levy will be discussed. This is a chance to think about what it really means to "see someone." Then on December 12 the group will return to an author that we've appreciated before, Colson Whitehead, and his book *Crook Manifesto.*

Everyone is invited to join whenever you are able, at 10:00 a.m. in the Schroedel 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 at the church in person or join remotely via Zoom. To join from your computer, tablet, or smart phone, **click here.**

Calendar

Friday, October 23 - St. James of Jerusalem, martyr, died around 62
The Olive Branch is published
7:00 p.m. Recovery Group [Undercroft]

Saturday, October 24

Sunday, October 25 – Reformation Sunday, Lect. 30 A
8:00 a.m. ***Holy Eucharist***, followed by coffee and fellowship
9:30 a.m. Godly Play [Circle 1 and Circle 2 Rooms]
9:30 a.m. Youth Conversation Group [Undercroft Youth Space]
10:20 a.m. Cantorei warm-up [Manz Choir Room]
10:45 a.m. ***Holy Eucharist***, followed by coffee and fellowship
12:30 p.m. Semi-annual Congregational Meeting & Potluck [Undercroft]

Monday, October 26 - Philipp Nicolai, died 1608; Johann Heermann, died 1647; Paul Gerhardt, died 1676; hymnwriters
5:30 p.m. Family Music [Zoom]
7:00 p.m. Monday Night WAVE [Undercroft]

Tuesday, October 27
12:00 p.m. Bible Study [East Assembly]
7:00 p.m. Indigenous Discussion Group [Schroedel Library]

Wednesday, October 28 - St. Simon and St. Jude, Apostles
10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting [Schroedel Library]
11:00 a.m. Personnel Working Group Meeting [Schroedel Library]
1:00 p.m. *The Olive Branch* Submission Deadline
5:30 p.m. Children & Youth Choirs Supper [Undercroft]
6:00 p.m. Children & Youth Choirs Rehearsal [Circle 3 Room & South Transept]
7:00 p.m. Cantorei Rehearsal [Manz Choir Room]
7:00 p.m. Y2 Confirmation [Schroedel Library]

Thursday, October, 29
9:30 a.m. ***Morning Prayer*** [Columbarium Transept of the Nave]
7:00 p.m. Narcotics Anonymous [Undercroft]

Friday, October 30
The Olive Branch is published
7:00 p.m. Recovery Group [Undercroft]

The Olive Branch Publication Schedule

The Olive Branch is published every week on Friday.

The submission deadline for the October 30 issue is **1:00 p.m. Wednesday, October 28**.