

January 2018

THE

Messenger

MOUNT OLIVE LUTHERAN CHURCH · ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA · 507-288-1580 · MOLIVE.ORG

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

On the first day of Christmas my true love sent to me a Partridge in a Pear Tree

This song is, for many people, what “The Twelve Days of Christmas” refers to. Or perhaps they think of the twelve days of Christmas as the last twelve days of the Christmas marketing season, ending on December 25, or maybe December 26 with “after-Christmas sales.” But traditionally, Christmas Day doesn’t *end* the twelve days of Christmas—it *begins* them. The twelve days, also known as *Twelvetide*, culminate on January 6 with the festival of Epiphany.

In an effort to reclaim some of the tradition associated with the Twelve Days of Christmas, and to provide more opportunities for congregational fellowship, we will be observing a Twelfth Night festival on Friday, January 5. One of the traditions associated with Twelfth Night is the burning of the greens, so we will be kicking off the celebration with the burning of the Christmas tree in the church parking lot. This will be followed by a potluck meal and a time of fellowship and board games, continuing the centuries-old focus on food and drink as part of the festival.

And who knows—there might even be some caroling. A Twelfth Night celebration would hardly be complete without singing “The Twelve Days of Christmas” or “Here We Come A-wassailing.” So please plan to join us on January 5 from 5:30-7:30. Bring a dish to share and a board game to play. Hope to see you there!

-Travis Beck

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Epiphany Celebrated January 6 and 7

One of the other ancient traditions of the church is to celebrate The Epiphany of Our Lord each January. This festival day reminds us of God’s broad revelation to all people. This year, we will be observing Epiphany on Saturday and Sunday January 6 and 7 in all of our worship services. Remember to wear white and gold, the colors of the day, as we embody this celebratory movement in our world.

2 Hospitality Means Being a “WARM” Person

We sometimes say that someone is a “warm person.” We don’t mean their body temperature; we mean that they make us feel comfortable by their friendliness. Hospitality is all about being this kind of person, so to help us remember this, memorize this acrostic for the next time you meet someone new in church:

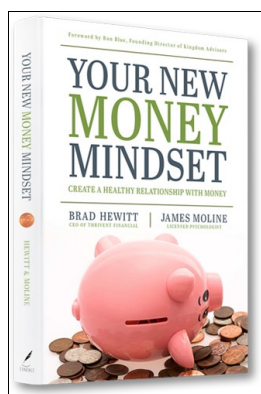
W is for Welcome. Greet the new person with a warm welcome. If you aren’t sure if they are a member just say, “I don’t think we’ve met.”

A is for Ask. Ask them their name. If it helps, ask them to spell it. Try to attach that name to something memorable about them, like what they are wearing that day.

R is for Relate. Get connected. Find out how they came to Mount Olive or if they have friends or relatives here. Introduce them to your own friends. Invite them to coffee or some other activity.

M is for Make Them Feel Comfortable. Do they need directions? Do they need help during the worship service? Try to “get in their shoes” and understand how they feel as a newcomer. It will make all the difference. You might even make a new friend.

Embrace a New Money Mindset



Special guest, Mia Erickson, a financial planner with Thrivent Financial in Rochester, will be offering a class in January to help us have a new mindset about money. Using the new book, *Your New Money Mindset*, written by Thrivent Financial CEO, Brad Hewitt, and Dr. James

Moline, licensed psychologist, this class seeks to teach us how to replace the tension and fear we feel about money with contentment and peace. Here’s what the authors say: “It is not sufficient to focus just on the mechanics of money. We need to start with the heart. In *Your New Money Mindset*, we examine four spectrums of our relationship with money, and we talk about practical ways that people can start living in the ‘4 C’s’ – in Confidence (Freedom), Community, Contentment, and Calling.” Classes will be held on Wednesdays, January 17, 24, 31, and February 7 at 6:30 – 7:15 pm in the Library. Books for the class are available for each individual to purchase online for only \$5 (with the provided coupon). Purchase of the book includes a free online assessment, action steps, and a study guide. Please sign up for the class in the Gathering Area where you will also find the coupons for purchasing the books. If you need help with the mechanics of purchasing, please see Nancy Britson in the church office for assistance.

Open Budget Meeting Jan. 14

If you would like to take a detailed look at the 2017 proposed budget, come to the Open Budget Meeting on January 14. Meet in the library at 9:15 am. This is an opportunity to go over the budget and ask any detailed questions.

Annual Meeting January 28

Each year in January, our Mount Olive community gathers for a meal followed by our annual meeting. This is a time to reflect on the accomplishments and blessings of the previous year, and an opportunity to look forward to where God is calling us in the year ahead. In addition to the annual reports of ministry teams and staff, we will elect new officers to lead us in our mission and ministry. The Women of the ELCA will serve lunch following the 10:30 service on January 28, the meeting will begin at noon. Mark your calendars for this important gathering!

2018 Offering Envelopes

Offering envelopes for anyone who is not a *Simply Giver* have been made available in the church entry and will be placed in your church mailbox if they are not picked up. Contact Bill in the church office if you would like envelopes or have any giving questions.

Volunteer Update

Have you noticed some new faces serving in worship? Metamorphosis youth and their families, new members, and volunteers who attended the recent training have been among those recently serving. We are so thankful for everyone who helps the worship services run smoothly. However, there are always vacancies on the schedules. Is there a time that you could serve? At Mount Olive, volunteers select their service opportunities, time and date, via the online scheduling program, Sign Up Genius. If you would like to receive an invitation to Sign Up Genius or have any questions about volunteering at Mount Olive, please contact Nancy Britson, Director of Congregational Life. The current schedules are updated regularly and posted on the Mount Olive website, www.molive.org, under the "Service" tab. Links to the Sign Up Genius schedules are also on the website. Consider yourself invited!!



New Bell Choir

Beginning **January 18**, we will be adding a second bell choir designed for new and inexperienced players. If you've never played bells before and wish to learn, or you have only limited experience and want to improve your technique, this bell choir is for you! Rehearsals will be from 6:30-7:15 pm on Thursday evenings in the music room. Adults and youth, ages middle school and up, are invited. Contact Travis Beck for more information if you're interested in joining at travis@molive.org



**New Companions
in Ministry!**
**¡ nuevos
compañeros en el
Ministerio!**

We are happy to announce that Mount Olive's companion congregation in Colombia is Lluvias de Gracia in Porvenir, Bogota. We look forward to connecting with this mission congregation in 2018.

Children's Christmas Program

On Sunday December 17, we celebrated the Christmas Season with the Christmas Program. The story involved four main characters who were working to put on a Christmas program in a fictional congregation. Unknown to the two main characters, Mattie and Lucy, the director had given them different scripts: Mattie's based on the Gospel of Matthew and Lucy's based on Luke. This caused a great amount of confusion between the characters with scenes and participants not lining up. Eventually, we all learned that even though the stories of Jesus' birth vary from Matthew to Luke, they both help us learn about who and what Christ is and does for us. Thanks to all of the Sunday School teachers, music leaders, and parents for their help in preparing for the program!

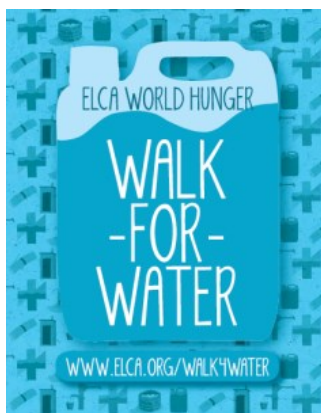


Service at Mount Olive

I am so thankful for the thousands of service hours Mount Olive volunteers donated in 2017. Family Promise, Food for Friends, Channel One, Habitat for Humanity, Next Chapter Ministries, and neighborhood schools are just a few of our ministry partners that volunteers dedicated their time to. *Compelled by God's Love* is the theme chosen for this program year, and with each hand that served, each voice that encouraged, and each selfless dollar given, we saw the hand of God compelling each volunteer to share the love that Christ gave so freely. It is very exciting to me as the Director of Missions and Service to work with so many generous and caring people, and I am humbled by the many volunteers who take on leadership roles making sure that each volunteer task is carried out. Thank you so much. It is a pleasure working here at Mount Olive, and I look forward to what we will accomplish in 2018.

~Sherry Will

ELCA Walk for Water



On January 14, our Second Sunday of Service project will be a "Walk for Water" to raise money and awareness for the ELCA World Hunger Project. Our Walk for Water will involve walking a course set up inside the church.

While carrying water, students will encounter obstacles that those without clean safe water have to face on a daily basis.

Sunday school students are asked to bring all the coins they have collected over the last month for the privilege of using clean safe water. This money will go to support water projects around the world. Through these gifts, local communities will be equipped to provide water for drinking and growing crops, sanitation and hygiene, etc. Each student is also asked to bring an empty half gallon or gallon milk jug prior to that day. For questions contact Sherry Will at sherry@molive.org or Kailea Mattheis at kailea@molive.org.

SSOM Team Meeting

A reminder to all Service and Social Outreach team members: the next team meeting is Tuesday, January 16, 6:30 pm in the Mount Olive Library. Please arrange your schedule so you can attend this important planning meeting, or have another volunteer take your place.

Mitten Tree

Mount Olive, you have amazed and delighted young children and elementary students as well as many young adults. Your very generous donations of winter wear arrived just prior to our end of December snow and cold. Contributions to the Mitten Tree have warmed the hearts and bodies of so many. You made a big difference!! We collected MANY hats, socks, neck warmers, scarves, mittens, and gloves in addition to pairs of boots, coats, and snow pants. Thank you!

The Service and Social Outreach Ministry Team

Lenten Soup Suppers

Soup suppers will be served each Wednesday night during Lent from 5:45-6:45. The first meal will be Ash Wednesday, February 14. Many volunteers are needed each week to bring soup, serve and clean up. Helping with a soup supper is a great opportunity for fellowship while working together. Small groups or ministry teams are encouraged to choose a week and sign up to serve together. The freewill offering for the meals will go to ELCA World Hunger. Please sign up in the Gathering Area. Contact Nancy Britson with questions at nancy@molive.org.





Prayer Shawl Ministry

Tuesday, January 9 at 9:00 am

As our members continue to knit and crochet prayer shawls to comfort those who are experiencing a difficult time, over the past year we have also knitted hats for our local schools and Lutheran World Relief baby care kits and baby blankets for Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. At our December meeting, we packed up 24 knitted and crocheted blankets for Little Singer

Community School in Winslow, AZ, Wounded Knee School District in Manderson, SD, and OST Child Protection Services in Pine Ridge, SD. We meet each month on the 2nd Tuesday at 9 am and always welcome new members to join us in this ministry. If you or someone you know are in need of a prayer shawl please contact Peg Whitley or the office staff.

Food For Friends Needs You!

Are you looking for a meaningful opportunity to spend 15 to 30 minutes of your free time each week? Do you have 15 to 30 minutes a week to invest in area youth and are looking for an enjoyable motivated team of volunteers to join? If you answered yes, Food for Friends, formerly known as the Mount Olive Backpack program, needs you. Each week our drivers and packers, working with Channel One and John Adams support staff, make a big difference by providing nourishing food for 35 to 50 students at John Adams Middle School. **The January schedule has several openings for drivers and packers. Please sign up at the Gathering Area table. If you have questions or need to arrange a substitute, contact Warren Kemplin at 507-254-4932 or Mark Schultze at 254-4164.**

Monthly Service Opportunities

Regularly scheduled opportunities that Mount Olive members participate in include:

- Serving Meals at the Dorothy Day Hospitality House 1st Friday of the month
- Construction on the current Habitat for Humanity Project 2nd Saturday of the month
- Distributing food for Community Food Response (CFR) 3rd Monday afternoon of the month

See the sign up schedules for the above ministries on the Gathering Area cabinet.

Second Sunday of Service

In preparation for the February Service Sunday, supplies will be gathered for Lutheran World Relief Baby Care Kits. The kits are distributed as part of emergency relief efforts, but they are also given to encourage expectant women to seek prenatal care. Help welcome the littlest ones into a caring international community and swaddle them with love! Pick up a Baby Care Kit card in the Gathering Area this month to donate to Lutheran World Relief or pick up a jacket kit to be sewn or blanket to be hemmed from the Gathering Area cupboard. The kits will be assembled on February 11 for the Service Sunday.

Mount Olive Quilters

Thursdays at 9:00 am in the Fellowship Hall

Join the Mount Olive quilters each Thursday as they assemble quilts that are sent near and far to appreciative recipients. In 2017, quilts were sent to Lutheran World Relief, the Crisis Nursery, the Rochester Women's Shelter, NAMI, Colombia, the Good Earth Village auction, and more! Participants do not need to have any sewing ability to help; much of the work involves tying the quilts. Those who sew assemble the squares and sew the bindings. The group is always in need of cotton fabrics. **Donations may be left in the cupboard in the Gathering Area here packages of quilt squares to be sewn are also found.**

Sunday Forum

Each Sunday at 9:15 am we gather in the Fellowship Hall to hear from congregational and community resource people about various topics where faith and society overlap. In January, we will learn from a wide variety of presenters on contemporary topics. Be sure to get your coffee and join us each Sunday at 9:15 in the Fellowship Hall for these stimulating discussions:

January 7 – LGBTQ 101– See Details in Inclusive Church Taskforce article below

January 14 – Inclusive Church Taskforce Q & A Coffee Hour– details below

January 21 – Continuing discussion of the ELCA Social Statement on Criminal Justice

January 28 - Radical Hospitality – What does that mean for Mount Olive?

Inclusive Church Taskforce Update

Upcoming events sponsored by the Inclusive Church Taskforce include:

January 7—LGBTQ 101 at Adult Forum

Have you ever wondered what LGBTQ means? Do you wonder about the people behind the letters? Join us for an opportunity to explore how people use different terms to identify themselves. Come learn how to speak about gender identity and sexual orientation. Vangie

Castro is currently on the Board of Directors at Gay Lesbian Community Services of SE Minnesota and will be leading this excellent learning opportunity!

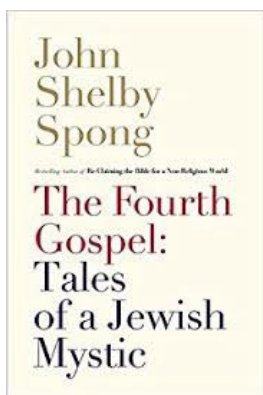
January 14—Q & A Coffee Hour

We'd love to hear from you! Inclusive Church Taskforce members will be available for conversation and questions between services. Come to the Fellowship Hall at 9:15 am to visit with the team and get your questions answered.

Stay tuned! Later this winter there will be an educational opportunity that will explore what Scripture has to say about human sexuality.



DVD Available in Church: The documentary "For The Bible Tells Me So" is available to check out from the church library.



Faith Seeking Understanding (FSU)

Faith Seeking Understanding reads and shares conversations about a variety of books and videos on theology, spirituality, social justice, and Christianity and our changing church. FSU does not meet in January; the next meeting is on the first Tuesday of February at 6:30 pm. The reading for **February 6:** *The Fourth Gospel: Tales of a Jewish Mystic* by John Shelby Spong. All are welcome to join the discussion. Meet in the Mount Olive library. If you have any questions, please contact Kailea Mattheis, Director of Children, Youth, and Family at kailea@molive.org or 507-288-1580 ext. 207.

Pub Theology

Do you enjoy thinking about faith, life, and what it means to be a follower of Jesus in our world today? Do you like to gather with others for stimulating conversation and being opened to new ideas? If any of these sound like you, come join us Monday nights for Pub Theology, led by Pastor Paul. Meet us at the Hy-Vee Market Grill at the 37th Street Hy-Vee. Topics are always sent out a day ahead of time and can be found at rochesterpublictheology.wordpress.com. Come and join as you're able. Order food or a beer at 5:30 pm, conversation begins at 6:00 pm. See you at the pub! **Note that Pub Theology will not meet on January 15.**

144 Envelopes! January Youth Fundraiser

Our youth have the option to take two different trips this summer, including the Upper Peninsula Trip and the ELCA Youth Gathering. These trips give youth a chance to explore their faith and learn more about God and God's world. Fundraising for the ELCA Youth Gathering has been off to a great start. The day of the Christmas Program, we hosted a bake sale and all the proceeds went towards the cost of the gathering. With the help of all the donations and sales, the youth raised approximately \$1,300. So thank you very much for all the support!

However, due to the high cost associated with the trips, these youth could still greatly use your monetary support to make the trips affordable for all families. In January, we will be starting the "144 Envelopes" fundraiser. Stop by a table in the entry way to pick up an envelope with any number between "1" and "144" on the front. That number is the amount of money you would like to donate. You decide your level of help! Envelopes will be available starting January 7 and will remain out through February 11. If all envelopes are picked up and fulfilled the youth will raise over \$10,000! That will help cover both trips! Please prayerfully consider helping the youth explore their faith in various places! Thanks!

Metamorphosis Resumes January 3

Metamorphosis is off to a great start this year! This past fall we engaged with stories of *God's Saving Acts* in the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament) in a unit called "Proclaim Story". This was to help students learn how God has worked in the world and how we are called to be a part of these saving acts! As January begins we will be moving into our winter unit, "Proclaim Justice". This unit will help students learn how we can steward acts of justice in our world. Metamorphosis is not limited just to confirmation students! Older youth and adults interested in learning more about how we can Proclaim Justice in our world are welcome on Wednesday nights. Metamorphosis begins January 3rd with the family meal at 5:30 and table discussion beginning at 6:00 pm. Join us in conversation about our call to serve our neighbors, both near and far!

Sunday School Check-In

Sunday School has been off to a great start this year! We have experienced lots of fun and learning. Our Sunday School lessons have been based on the lectionary-the readings we hear during worship. In addition to Sunday School lessons, the children get the opportunity to participate in various service projects that help benefit people in our community, state, country, and the world. The service projects that they completed in the fall of 2017 were blizzard boxes for elderly citizens in Mankato and Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief. There are three more service Sundays left during the program year, so be sure to come and help us serve our neighbors! Our next Service Sunday is January 14, which is when we will be doing a Walk for Water for the ELCA's World Hunger campaign.

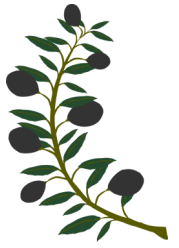
U.P. Adventure Trip

In August of 2018, Kailea will be leading a camping trip to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan for 6th-12th grade students. We will be working our way through the eastern portion of the U.P. During the trip we will be hiking to waterfalls, Sugar Loaf Mountain, and the Log Slide near Grand Marais; kayaking in Lake Superior; swimming in Lakes Superior and Michigan; biking around Mackinac Island; and camping in Michigan's beautiful state parks!

Once we have a solid list of who would like to attend, Kailea will host an informational meeting about where we will be going and what we will be doing! Please sign up in the Gathering Area as soon as possible! If you are interested in this wonderful trip or have any questions, please contact Kailea (507-288-1580 ext. 207 or kailea@molive.org)

Ripe Olives

Ripe Olives, the group for Mount Olive's seniors, meets again on Friday, January 12 at 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. This month will feature a speaker, Laurie Mangel, on the topic **Downsizing: Simplify Your Life**. Laurie will help us with suggestions for the time consuming and emotional process of simplifying your home. This will be a great way to get 2018 off to a good start! Feel free to invite friends or new members. Everyone is welcome! Breakfast is provided with a free will offering. Sign up at the Gathering Area table. Contact Nancy Britson, Director of Congregational Life, with questions 288-1580 ext. 202.



Monday Book Group



The Monday Book Group gathers again on **January 8** at 6:30 pm, in the library, for their monthly book discussion. The January selection is *Hidden Figures* by Margot Lee Shetterly. The phenomenal true story of the black female mathematicians at NASA whose calculations helped fuel some of America's greatest achievements in space. This group of dedicated female mathematicians known as "human computers" used pencils, slide rules, and adding machines to calculate the numbers that would launch rockets, and astronauts, into space. New readers are always welcome to join the group. Contact Jodi Schoer for more information, mjschoer@charter.net or 288-1951.

Adventure Club

The Mount Olive Adventure Club is a diverse and dynamic group of people of all ages that enjoy exploring a wide variety of activities. In December, the group brought Christmas cheer to residents of Shorewood, The Homestead, and The Waters with some Christmas caroling in four part harmony. The youngest members of the group distributed some Christmas goodies to the older folks.

In January, the Adventure Club plans to go sledding on Monday, **January 15**. There is no school that day due to the Martin Luther King Holiday. If there is enough snow, we will go to a local sledding hill and come back to church to warm up with some hot chocolate. Watch for time/place details in January bulletins and the Adventure Club Facebook page and hope for snow!

Save the Date! Mark your February calendar for Friday, **February 16** at 6:30 pm. The Adventure Club will sponsor a movie showing in the Fellowship Hall. Bring the whole family for a family-friendly movie, popcorn, and snacks. If you would like to be added to the Adventure Club email list or Facebook group, contact Erin Sinnwell—etracy515@hotmail.com or Rachel Carlson—carl1347@morris.umn.edu

Annual Meeting Meal

Mount Olive's Women of the ELCA will serve a hot meal prior to the January 28 meeting. The free-will offering will support the many benevolence programs the women's group is involved with. Help is needed for providing food, serving and cleanup. Members from each of the women's circles are encouraged to sign up in the gathering area to help. If you have questions, please contact Renee Schaefer- vettelady54601@yahoo.com, Erin Sinnwell—etracy515@hotmail.com, or Nancy Britson-nancy@molive.org.

Twelfth Night Potluck

Join the celebration of the Twelfth Night of Christmas (as referred to on the front cover) on Friday, January 5. The potluck meal will begin in the Fellowship Hall following the burning of the greens. Table service and beverages will be provided. Bring a main dish, side dish or dessert to share. Sign up in the Gathering Area to help with set up or clean up.

Little Leapers Meet January 7

Little Leapers is a group for parents of newborns through tots not yet in Pre-Kindergarten Sunday School. Come and join in conversation and fellowship **with your child!** We meet the first Sunday of each month in the library nook of the gathering area at 9:15 am. The next meeting is **January 7** at 9:15 am; everyone is welcome! Contact Serena Oudekirk with any questions- Serena.Oudekirk@grarate.com.



Saint Lucia Celebration



On Sunday, December 10, Mount Olive celebrated the Festival of Saint Lucia. Special thanks to Naomi, Rachel, and Anna Circles for preparing for the procession of Saint Lucia and serving the receptions following each service.

Samantha Fletcher and Grace

Freed portrayed Lucia along with star boys Logan Swartwood, Jack Vance, Brayden Ruchotzke and Hunter Peterson. Mint girls were

Hannah Johns, Isabelle Anderson, Lina Oudekirk, Violet Kuehl, Lydia and Harper Sinnwell, and Grace Haase. Check out the Mount Olive Facebook page for more pictures of the celebration.



Women of the ELCA

Mount Olive women celebrated "A German Christmas" on December 4.

Nearly 60 women enjoyed German food, wonderful music, and a captivating



speaker, Nancy Cashman, representing Gage East Housing and the Empowerment Center. Donations of over \$800 in cash and gift cards and four boxes of donated household items for youths housed at Gage East were graciously received by their staff.



Note: Women of the ELCA circle study leaders, please attend the monthly leader preparation meeting led by Pastor Glenn on the first Tuesday of the month. The next meeting is on **January 2** in the front Conference Room at 5:30 pm. Bring your study book and a Bible.

Winter Wednesday Meals

Beginning January 3, meals are served at 5:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall each Wednesday in January. Everyone is welcome to come and eat prior to the Metamorphosis class, the Money Mindset class, choir practice, or just because you want a hot meal. There is a suggested \$3.00 donation. Helpers are needed to help prepare, serve, and clean up; please sign up in the gathering area or email nancy@molive.org.

Each meal includes a main dish and vegetables as well as a fresh greens salad with toppings, peanut butter & jelly, bread, applesauce, cookies, milk and lemonade. Water and decaf coffee is also available.

Fair Trade Coffee

Stop by the **Fair Trade Coffee** display in the Gathering Area to check out the varieties of ground and whole bean coffee and tea available for purchase. You can also sign up to sponsor the coffee on an upcoming Sunday. For \$15 you can help offset the cost of the coffee served during fellowship time and celebrate an occasion such as a birthday, anniversary, or the memory of a loved one.



Take note of the bulletin board outside the office door where thank-you letters are posted as they arrive. It is heart-warming to read of the gratitude our mission partners have for Mount Olive.

Spiritual Care

Mount Olive has a Prayer Chain, coordinated by Kim Ignatius. If you have a prayer request and would like the prayer chain to be in prayer for you or someone you love, please contact Kim at: 507-271-6087 or ignatius.kimberlie@charter.net.

Please contact the church staff if you have any prayer concerns:

- Pastor Glenn: glenn@molive.org
- Pastor Paul: paul@molive.org
- Church office: 507-288-1580

Flowers in the Sanctuary

The 2018 schedule for providing flowers on the chancel is now available. You may place orders for birthdays, anniversaries, baptismal birthdays, births, or in memory of loved ones. Sign up at the Gathering Area cabinet where you will find the calendar and payment envelopes. Please write your name and the designation for the flowers on both the calendar and the payment envelope. Your envelope may then be placed in the offering plate or the office drop box. Order at least one week in advance. Bouquets are \$30 and bud vases range from \$7.50-\$13.50. Thank you for helping to brighten the sanctuary each week.



Mount Olive Lutheran Church

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9:00AM-noon Fri.

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