



The Messenger

January 2021

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

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Our 60th Anniversary Year Has Arrived!

Amidst all the upheaval of the pandemic, one thing has been forced to the back burner – the celebration of the 60th anniversary of Mount Olive. Unable to continue in-person gatherings, all of our plans for a year of regular events leading to our actual anniversary went by the wayside. Be that as it may, we remain determined to celebrate our 60th year as a congregation even if that means delaying the actual celebration beyond **March 12**, which is our actual anniversary. January, you should know, is an important month in the life of Mount Olive. Just look at some of the staff changes that have taken place in Januarys past:

- 1984 - Carol Joyce was called as our first Associate in Ministry for Youth and Education
- 1999 - Pastors Peter and Kathie Nycklemoe were called as our first clergy couple
- 2006 - Pastor Siri Strommen was called as Associate Pastor
- 2019 - Pastors Luke Hollander and Lisa Janke, clergy couple, were called as Associate Pastors, Pastor Luke as Associate Pastor of Children, Youth and Family, and Pastor Lisa as Associate Pastor of Outreach.

For some reason, the New Year has regularly brought new leadership to Mount Olive, and how blessed we have been by these fine leaders.

One important goal for our 60th anniversary is our commitment to raise significant dollars for our ongoing life and our mission partners through the **60th Anniversary Fund**. Some of you have in place an ongoing pledge and others have made gifts. Thank you! Because of your contributions to the fund in the last two years we have already been able to meet two of our goals – purchase of an updated video/projection system in the sanctuary and completion of the dining hall for the Hull School in Kijota, Tanzania. Going forward, the Executive Council has established a goal of raising \$60,000 this year with the funds going to those designees which remain unfulfilled:

Olive Branch – Family Promise – Good Earth Village – Lutheran Bible Institute of Kiomboi

Mount Olive Seminary Scholarship Fund – Kijota Hull High School Scholarship Fund

We invite you to make a contribution at any time in this anniversary year to help us meet our goal. Mount Olive continues in this its 60th year to be a vibrant and important center of mission and ministry for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God!



Annual Meeting to be Held Virtually

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held virtually on Sunday, **January 31**. The meeting will open at 10:30 am and be called to order at 11:00 am. A small group of leaders will gather in-person in the Sanctuary at Mount Olive and all other participants are invited to gather via YouTube live, or for those without a computer, via Zoom by calling a designated phone number. Further directions regarding your participation in this important meeting and links for YouTube and Zoom will be sent out by email and listed in the weekly bulletins. Members must be present at the virtual meeting to cast a vote for election of officers/ministry leaders, approval of the annual budget, and any other items necessitating a vote. Ballots will be sent to them by mail and must be returned to the Mount Olive office. Voting will take place January 31 – February 7.

Annual Budget Meeting

For those wishing to review the proposed budget for 2021 prior to the Annual Meeting on January 31, a Budget Meeting will be held virtually via Zoom at 11:00 am on Sunday, January 17. The financial officers, and Executive Council will be present at that meeting to answer your questions. All voting members are welcome. Watch your email for the link to this meeting.

Stewardship Update

For those of you who have been wondering how pledges have been coming in for 2021, here are the totals as of the end of December. For those who have yet to return a pledge card, your pledge is still very much appreciated.

	Pledge Cards	General Fund	Building Fund	Olive Branch
2020	142	\$481,700	\$103,000	N/A
2021	129	\$450,000	\$98,000	\$26,000

New Mount Olive Taskforce

Later this month, all who are interested are invited to take part in a conversation about how Mount Olive might move forward in learning about and addressing systemic racism, and considering new ways of living and moving in the world together. If you have not done so already, reach out to Pastor Lisa to be a part of this conversation.

Contact Pastor Lisa at lisa@molive.org

COVID-19 Guidance for In-Person Meetings

In-person meetings at Mount Olive are now limited to 10 people with safety guidelines in place. The guidelines are available on the church website, www.molive.org or by contacting the office. Meetings must be scheduled ahead of time with church staff. Wearing masks, practicing social distance and using hand sanitizer or washing hands frequently are required. If anyone is showing any signs or symptoms of COVID, or has been in contact with anyone who has presumed or confirmed COVID – they should not attend in-person meetings until they have completed the recommended time of isolation. Your cooperation is appreciated!

Offering Envelopes Available

Offering envelopes for anyone who does not use *Simply Giving* have been made available to pick up in the church entry. The building is open daily for the Family Circle Learning Center, so stop by anytime. If you are interested in learning more about electronic giving to Mount Olive, please call Bill Hollander at 288-1580, ext. 204 or bill.h@molive.org.



Yes, Tailgate Worship Continues – Weather Permitting

Will Tailgate Worship continue on Sundays in January? Yes! Weather permitting. When it gets too cold and/or snowy for us to gather we won't, but until then... bring your thermos of hot coffee and/or cocoa, your Holy Communion supplies, and your sense of adventure and join us Sundays, January 10 and 24 for Tailgate Worship at 11:00 am in the Mount Olive parking lot. Just think, you can tell your grandkids about this someday!



Sunday Psalm Prayer—30 Minutes of Quiet Goodness

Beginning January 3, 2021, join Richard Bruxvoort Colligan every Sunday at 4:30 pm for engagement of the psalms with music, reflection, silence and prayer. This will be a live event on YouTube. We are working out the details on how to best share the livestream link each week – but you will surely be able to connect through the Olive Branch YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPRunOmryq5TCrOsrXM5Otw>



A Different Kind of Christmas

A year ago, who would have thought that on Christmas Eve, we'd drive to church for worship, but never leave our cars? That's just what many people did this year, participating in the Lessons and Carols service from the Mount Olive parking lot. We heard the familiar voices of our pastors over the radio, sang along with the hymns, and listened to scripture proclaiming that Christ was born for us. Our hearts were warmed on that cold night!



Artist's Studio

Olive Branch continues to gather each Monday, 6:30 – 8:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall for Artist's Studio. In the coming months we will repeat some of the most well-received workshops and offer some new ones, along with Open Studio nights to work on any project you choose. **Our January 4, 2021 workshop will be making star cards.** A star card is a collaborative piece of art that contains a star word specifically chosen for you. A star word is an intention word, or guiding word, that can serve as a reminder for you throughout the year. It may help you focus during meditation or become a centering word for your prayer life. It is called a star word because of its tie to Epiphany – the day in the church year

when we celebrate the Magi's arrival to visit Jesus, having followed a star to find their way. Find out more about Artist's Studio and the Star Cards event here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/133131729587>



Olive Branch Press

Did you know that Olive Branch has been receiving some good press? Our workshop on designing a Blue Christmas/ Winter Solstice service was featured in the Faith+Lead e-newsletter from Luther Seminary that reaches over 15,000 readers. These same resources are being share on an ELCA website that compiles resources for faith formation. Read the Faith+Lead article here: <https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/dreaming-of-a-blue-christmas/>

Olive Branch Website

Visit olivebranchcommunity.org to soak in all the incredible things that are now possible (and already happening) because of your support. Stop by to register for upcoming events such as Off the Page or Artist Studio, access many resources, and learn more about Olive Branch. There is an option to offer financial support to Olive Branch as well.

Service

Family Promise Update

Family Promise (FP) has moved to their new day center at 913 1st St. NW. The staff are now working in their offices, which are located in the house. Right now there are no families in the program due to COVID-19 and the need to keep guests, staff, and volunteers safe. The hopeful starting date for hosting guests at their new location is early spring.



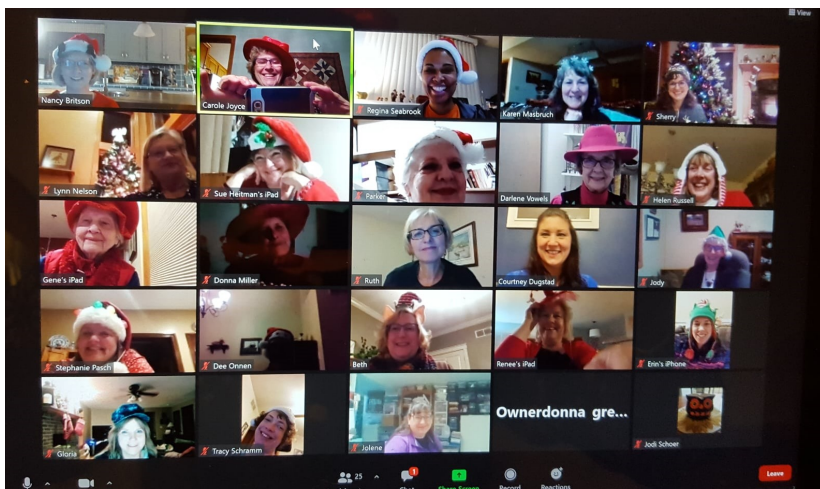
If you are looking for a way to help FP or families that have graduated from the program, you are invited to see the day center's wish list for items they need at their Target registry: tgt.gifts/fprhousewarming Please contact Program Director, Nicollette Meyer at 507-281-3122 or nmeyer@fprochestermn.org for information about other volunteer opportunities.

Next Chapter Ministries Purchases New Home

As Mount Olive women heard at their Christmas gathering, Next Chapter Ministries recently closed on the purchase of another home adjacent to the ones they already own in Southeast Rochester where they will continue to deeply serve families and individuals who desire to break the cycle of incarceration. You are invited to sign up to contribute items needed for this home by clicking the following link: [Men's Discipleship: New home needs \(signupgenius.com\)](https://signupgenius.com)

Women's Christmas Party

On December 7, about 25 women, many wearing festive Christmas hats, gathered via Zoom for the Women's Virtual Christmas party. The evening program included a Christmas devotion and a presentation by Courtney Dugstad, Executive Director of Next Chapter Ministries. The offering taken that night supported Next Chapter's Christmas Sharing Program. There was also a short business meeting to vote on the yearly budget for the Women of the ELCA in 2021. Following the meeting, participants had some time to chat and catch up and admire each others hats. The evening was enjoyed by all who attended.

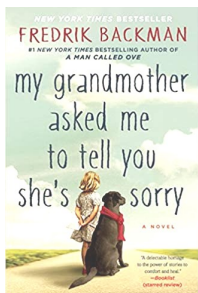


In January, women's small groups will resume meeting for fellowship and a study from *Gather Magazine*. Some groups will meet via Zoom and some will meet in person, socially distanced. Meeting times vary and include: Tuesday or Friday mornings, Tuesday afternoon, and Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Contact Regina Seabrook, Mount Olive Women of the ELCA President, with any questions or if you are interested in joining a small group - rseabroo@gmail.com.

The Women of the ELCA Study Leader's Meeting with Pastor Glenn is Tuesday, January 5 at 5:30 pm on Zoom.
You'll need your January copy of Gather Magazine.
Zoom ID: 853 9855 7199 Passcode: 399944



Monday Book Group



The **Monday Book Group** gathers monthly to discuss a wide variety of literature. They will meet again via Zoom January 11 at 6:30 pm. This month's selection is ***My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry*** by Fredrik Backman. The story is told with the same comedic accuracy and beating heart as Fredrik Backman's bestselling debut novel, *A Man Called Ove*. It is a story about life and death and one of the most important human rights: the right to be different. If you would like to be added to the email list or receive the Zoom invitation for January, contact Jodi Schoer at mjschoer@charter.net.

Pastor Glenn Visits Ripe Olives

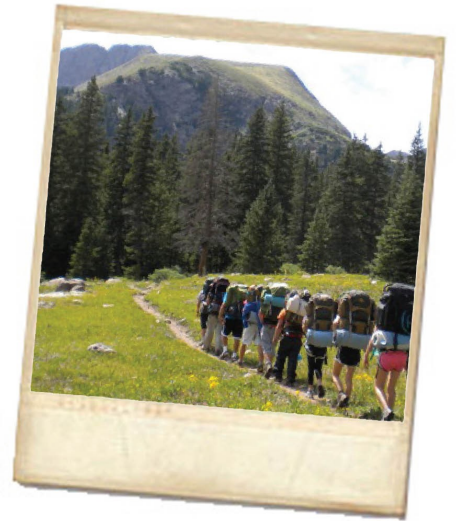


The "Ripe Olives", Mount Olives senior citizen's group, will gather again via Zoom on Friday, **January 8**, at 9:30 am. Several of our seniors have found this to be an enjoyable way to safely stay connected in these difficult times. This month, Pastor Glenn will be the special guest. There is no set agenda, but he will welcome your questions about church in the time of COVID-19 or perhaps he'll just want to discuss his new grandson. The Zoom meeting ID, which will stay the same each month, is: Meeting ID: 826 2188 5743 Passcode: 213773 Please contact Nancy Britson at nancy@molive.org or call 507-288-1580 with any questions.

Note: December's Ripe Olives gathering where Deacon Travis Beck presented the history of Santa Clause is available via a private YouTube link. Please contact Nancy for more information.

High School Trip to Colorado

One of the biggest disappointments from this pandemic was canceling the trip to Colorado. Good news, we are still going, just a year later! From July 24 to August 1, 2021, as many as 20 high school students from Mount Olive will be going on the adventure of a lifetime. There are still a few available spots if you or a friend would like to go on this trip. Our high schoolers will get a chance to explore their faith, build community, and have a mountainous adventure seeing God's beauty from a new perspective. Highlights will include white-water rafting on the Arkansas River, navigating a team high ropes course, and a multi-night backpacking adventure. Please contact Pastor Luke if you are interested or have any questions related to this trip – luke@molive.org



Mount Olive Ongoing CYF Events

Thanks to all that participated in online Sunday school, high school fellowship events and confirmation last fall. We have done our best to keep some semblance of normalcy. After Christmas we are taking a few weeks off before we get started again. Sunday school will start on Sunday, January 10; Confirmation will start on Wednesday, January 13; and High School Fellowship on Wednesday, January 20. Watch your emails for more information.



Online Sunday School Resumes January 10

Online Sunday School will resume following a break for the holidays on January 10. The YouTube links are available each week on Mount Olive's YouTube channel and also shared on the Facebook page. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Luke— luke@molive.org.

Pastor Glenn's Lutheranism 101 Class

If you have never been confirmed in the Lutheran faith and would like to receive instruction towards this, now is the time to consider joining Pastor Glenn's Lutheranism 101 class. Meeting Wednesdays, January 6 through February 3, at 6:30 pm via Zoom, this class will explore the treasures of the Lutheran faith, and introduce spiritual practices that have sustained Christians for millennia. To sign up, receive a book, or learn more, contact Pastor Glenn anytime, glenn@molive.org.

Pub Theology

Pub Theology continues to meet weekly on Mondays, 5:30 – 6:30 pm, on Zoom and has been enjoying this time of connection with each other. Weekly topics, announcements, and the link to our Zoom gathering continue to be posted at rochesterpublictheology.wordpress.com.

Devotions Available

Word in Season devotion books for January—March are available in the church office. Contact Nancy Britson if you would prefer to receive one by mail- nancy@molive.org or call 507-288-1580.

Pastor Glenn has resumed writing daily devotions in the new year. These are available in the weekly email communication, on the church website, www.molive.org, and are also available by mail upon request. Contact Nancy in the church office to be added to the mailing list—nancy@molive.org or call 507-288-1580.

Mitten Tree Collection

Thank you to everyone who contributed cold weather gear for students who attend our neighborhood school, Elton Hills Elementary. Many hats, gloves, mittens, scarves, and other items were donated. A number of items have already been delivered to the school and given to children, and the rest will be distributed following winter break.

God's Global Barnyard/Good Gifts

Thank you to those of you that participated in the God's Global Barnyard fundraiser. Because of your generosity and with a match of gifts from the ELCA, we were able to order: 10 chicks, 4 roosters, 8 honeybee colonies, 10 piglets, and 8 goats. What a wonderful way for Mount Olive to contribute to the global community. Watch for this campaign again next year!



Mount Olive Quilters Donate Quilts to the Women's Shelter



In early December, 61 quilts were donated to the Rochester Women's Shelter. Each year, the quilters give quilts which are gifted to women and children seeking refuge at the shelter. A limited number of the Mount Olive quilters have resumed meeting weekly in the Fellowship Hall, socially distanced while wearing masks. They meet Thursday mornings at 9:00 am. If you are interested in joining them, please contact Donna Grever at 507-206-4605. Kits of fabric for sewing quilts at home are also available for pick up in the Gathering Area cupboard. The cupboard also contains a bin for fabric donations. Drop off clean, cotton fabric measuring at least 12 x 12" in size.

Channel One

Channel One is not accepting donated food from the general public. You are asked to give financial contributions to help them to provide food to families experiencing difficult times. You may click on the ["Donate Now"](#) button on the church website or send a check to Mount Olive. Please indicate Channel One in the "other" section online or your check memo. If you are interested in volunteering at Channel One, please go to helpingfeedpeople.org/volunteer to learn more.



Mount Olive Prayer Shawl Group

The Mount Olive prayer shawl group will meet on January 12 at 10:00 am in the Fellowship Hall, socially distanced and wearing masks. Yarn, needles, patterns, and guidance are supplied; please contact Vickie Kubly if you would like to join the group—507-282-7696. If you would like to request a prayer shawl for someone who is experiencing illness, loss, or a difficult time, please contact Vickie, or you may call the church office at 507-288-1580.



Community Food Response Seeks Drivers

Community Food Response has been working to feed more and more food insecure families here in Rochester during this pandemic. Volunteers staff our client distribution site at the Exchange, where they have opened an additional day each week to feed the hungry.

Right now CFR is struggling to find more drivers and sorters to help them handle the increasing work that growing numbers of food-insecure families locally have created. Drivers pick up food from local restaurants, businesses, and hospitals and drop it off for sorting and distribution. Volunteers must be able to lift up to 30 pounds and have a vehicle large enough to accommodate donations, such as an SUV, van, or pickup. If you feel a call to help feed others in need, please contact them at communityfoodresponse@gmail.com or cfrpresident@gmail.com or sign up on their website www.communityfoodresponse.org and click on "volunteer".

Thank You!

Special thanks to everyone who helped to make the Advent, Christmas, & Longest Night services & the Children's Christmas Program so special! Your time spent in music practice and performance, uploading videos for worship, special music, and hymns, making creative use of technology, and preparing engaging sermons and videos was very much appreciated. (View any services you missed [here!](#))



Happy New Year!
From The Mount Olive Staff

If You Are In Need of Pastoral Care, Help with Errands, etc.

If you are having difficulty at during COVID restrictions and are in need of pastoral care, help with errands such as grocery shopping, picking up prescriptions, meals, etc., or if you would simply enjoy a friendly phone call on a regular basis, please let us know as there are a number of Mount Olive volunteers who are willing to help. You may contact the church office at 507-288-1580 or email Nancy Britson at nancy@molive.org. If you leave a message, we will return your call. In-person pastoral visits will continue to only be done in the case of emergencies.

Mount Olive's Welcome Statement:

"We trust that God calls Mount Olive Lutheran Church to a ministry of reconciliation. We embrace as a gift the diversity of our neighborhood and the world, and we extend God's hospitality by welcoming, hearing, and treasuring:

All gender identities and sexual orientations

All races and ethnicities

All ages and abilities

All economic statuses and education levels

All faith journeys and personal histories

As Christ welcomes all, we too welcome the full inclusion of all people into the life, ministry, and sacraments of Mount Olive, joining in a journey toward greater love, understanding, and mutual respect."



Mount Olive Lutheran Church

2830 18th Ave. NW
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507-288-1580 Website: molive.org



A Reconciling in
Christ Community

Mount Olive Staff

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Associate Pastor of Outreach

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The Rev. Luke Hollander
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