

JANUARY 2021

BELIEVING, BELONGING, BECOMING

MOUNT OLIVET MESSENGER



mtolivet.org



M MPLS CAMPUS

5025 Knox Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55419
612.926.7651

W WEST CAMPUS

7150 Rolling Acres Rd
Victoria, MN 55386
952.767.1500

If you would like to receive a large print copy of the *Messenger*, please contact Andrea Brown at andreab@mtolivet.org or 612.767.2209.

SUNDAYS

When Mount Olivet resumes in-person worship, our Sunday schedule is as follows:

- M** 9, 10, 11am, & 12noon
- W** 9, 10, & 11am

Holy Communion 8:30am and following the last service; Nursery 9, 10, 11am; Radio Broadcast on WDGY 740AM at 11am; Watch the Mpls worship service at mtolivet.org at 11am.

WEDNESDAYS

OPEN PRAYER TIME

- M W** 10am-12noon

Each Wednesday morning our sanctuaries will be opened for personal prayer time, reflection, and meditation.

IN-PERSON HOLY COMMUNION

- M W** 12noon

On the first Wednesday of each month, a short in-person communion service will be offered. Registration is required and seating is limited to 40 persons. Register at mtolivet.org or by calling 612.767.2264.

JANUARY 3

THE VISIT OF THE MAGI

Matthew 2: 1-23

Watch the worship service at mtolivet.org. Radio Broadcast on WDGY 740AM at 11am.

SERMON Pastor MacLean

JANUARY 24

THE CALLING OF THE DISCIPLES

Matthew 4:12-25

Watch the worship service at mtolivet.org. Radio Broadcast on WDGY 740AM at 11am.

SERMON Pastor Ruud

JANUARY 10

JESUS' BAPTISM BY JOHN

Matthew 3: 1-17

Watch the worship service at mtolivet.org. Radio Broadcast on WDGY 740AM at 11am.

SERMON Pastor Freeman

JANUARY 31

BEATITUDES, SALT & LIGHT

Matthew 5:1-16

Watch the worship service at mtolivet.org. Radio Broadcast on WDGY 740AM at 11am.

SERMON Pastor Hammersten

JANUARY 17

TEMPTATION IN THE WILDERNESS

Matthew 4:1-11

Watch the worship service at mtolivet.org. Radio Broadcast on WDGY 740AM at 11am.

SERMON Pastor Lose

COVER PHOTO

"The Magi" by Henri Siddons Mowbray

ENTERING INTO MATTHEW'S STORY OF JESUS

JANUARY 3 introduces us to the Magi in a story told only by Matthew. Various called wise men, sages, or the three kings, these wandering astrologers represent the expansive, all-inclusive nature of God's grace and love. Where have you seen evidence of that love and grace of late?

On **JANUARY 10**, we jump into St. Matthew's story of Jesus by reading of his baptism by John the Baptist. A crucial moment of this story is when God says, "with you I am well pleased." These are the words God says to us at our baptism as well! Where and how have you felt that God is pleased with who you are?

We'll hear the story of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness on **JANUARY 17** and observe how Jesus leans on his relationship with God to resist temptation. How might you strengthen your relationship in order to lead the life God has in store for you?

Jesus calls his first disciples in the story we hear on **JANUARY 24**. As we'll see, Jesus' disciples are ordinary, everyday kind of people. How is God at work in the ordinary elements of your life to make a difference for others?

JANUARY 31 reminds us of the "beatitudes," Jesus' list of those God blesses. When you pause to consider who Jesus names, you realize it's an unexpected bunch of people who are called "blessed." Where has God surprised you with blessing and how might you share that blessing with others?

A New Year of Joy, Gratitude, Worship, and Generosity

When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.—Matthew 2:10-11

Notice the pattern set by the magi: after a long journey with an unknown and uncertain future, they are at first overjoyed when their destination comes into view, overwhelmed by gratitude when they see the newborn king, fall to their knees in worship, and respond by giving gifts. Joy, gratitude, worship, generosity.

As Pastor Dixon observes in his devotion this month, the three kings don't really belong in this story. Of all four Gospels, Matthew's is the one most focused on Jesus' Jewish heritage, his fulfillment of Jewish prophecy, and his role and significance as the long-promised Jewish Messiah. Why, then, does Matthew tell of these wandering astrologers from Persia? Two reasons. First, even Matthew can't escape that fact that the good news of Jesus is all-inclusive and therefore has global, even cosmic, significance. Second, Matthew, who is particularly interested in what it means to follow Jesus, offers through this story a pattern for the life of all disciples: Joy at recognizing what God has done leads to gratitude to be the recipient and witness of blessing, which in turn occasions worship of God and generosity toward others.

It is popular at this time of year to make a New Year's resolution – something we're bound and determined to change in our lives. Give up smoking, run for a marathon, lose 20 pounds, be in touch with friends daily, whatever. There's nothing wrong with making resolutions, of course, but on average their success rate is pretty dismal. Researchers estimate that of all the resolutions Americans make each year, about only 8% of them are kept. Social psychologists also say that, rather than make a specific resolution, it's far more effective to pick a general attitude or broader life-style goal to change. So rather than "I'm going to lose 20 pounds" or "run four times a week" you might instead say, "I'm going to eat

more healthfully and exercise more" and then track anything and everything done toward that goal.

Along those lines, the pattern of discipleship that Matthew offers through his portrayal of the three kings offers all kinds of possibilities. What would it be like to be more joyful in the new year? Or to be more grateful? How might we make worship a more regular part of our lives? And what opportunities are there to be generous more consciously and intentionally? One of the outcomes of having to shift so much of our ministry online over the past year is that we're able to offer you support in all of these areas digitally. Weekly devotions, musical and written; online worship; manifold educational opportunities; multiple possibilities to serve the larger community; Zoom-based discussions, retreats, and small groups. In all these ways and more, Mount Olivet invites you to make this new year one of greater joy, gratitude, worship, and generosity! (And, on pg. 5, you'll find a way to make this part of your daily routine!)

We are, as a congregation, community, and country at a crossroads just now. We know that several vaccines are being distributed which, over time, will greatly help in bringing this pandemic to an end. At the same time, we know we are not yet there; indeed, the grim headlines remind us that we are at the deadliest and darkest part of the pandemic thus far. Which means we need the strength to press on even as many of us feel exhausted. Which again brings me back to Matthew's characteristics of the Christian life, as I have found again and again that cultivating these elements – joy, gratitude, worship, and generosity – always serves to renew my faith, energy, hope, and courage.

2020 was without a doubt one of the most challenging in our congregational and, indeed, global, history. 2021 will not be without significant challenges as well. But the year ahead is above and beyond all else another year of grace. Another year, that is, where we might see what God has done and be joyful and grateful such that we respond in worship and generosity. Blessed New Year, Mount Olivet Family!



Pastor Lose

DAVID J. LOSE, SENIOR PASTOR



UPDATE: CATHEDRAL OF THE PINES

Happy New Year! We are looking forward to an awesome summer at Cathedral of the Pines Camp 2021! I pray each day for a full, healthy, faith-filled, fun summer at COP! Below is the 2021 Calendar. As you know, our world is ever changing these days. We fully recognize that we may have to make adjustments to the camp schedule in months to come. We will keep you informed of our decisions based on the guidance following the CDC and the Minnesota Department of Health, working alongside the leadership of Mount Olivet Church.

Please put these dates on your calendar! We want the summer of 2021 to happen. Registration will open when we feel confident that we can move forward with a schedule. We will be updating the Messenger and the website monthly.

We could all use a little fresh, north shore air, chapel services twice a day, a time to meet new friends and to strengthen old friendships, rowdy meals, softball, a dip in Lake Caribou, and devotions with our cabin mates to end the evening. We will do everything we can to make that happen. Here's to hoping for a great 2021 camping season at Cathedral of the Pines!

— Kristi Youngdahl, Director of Cathedral of the Pines Camp

FRIDAY, 5/28 - MONDAY, 5/31: Opening Weekend Volunteers
THURSDAY, 6/3 - SUNDAY, 6/6: Hi-er League Weekend
MONDAY, 6/14 - SATURDAY, 6/19: Family Work Week
SUNDAY, 6/20 - THURSDAY, 6/24: Summer Starter (11/12/Graduates)
THURSDAY, 6/24 - SUNDAY, 6/27: 2020 Confirmation Class (10th Graders)
SUNDAY, 6/27 - FRIDAY, 7/2: 5th, 6th & 7th Grades
TUESDAY, 7/6 - FRIDAY, 7/9: 2021 Graduate Retreat
FRIDAY, 7/9 - WEDNESDAY, 7/14: Confirmation 1
WEDNESDAY, 7/14 - MONDAY, 7/19: 6th, 7th & 8th Grades
MONDAY, 7/19 - FRIDAY, 7/23: 3rd, 4th & 5th Grades
FRIDAY, 7/23 - WEDNESDAY, 7/28: 7th & 8th Grades
WEDNESDAY, 7/28 - MONDAY, 8/2: Confirmation 2
MONDAY, 8/2 - SATURDAY, 8/7: 6th, 7th & 8th Grades
SATURDAY, 8/7 - WEDNESDAY, 8/11: 3rd, 4th & 5th Grades
WEDNESDAY, 8/11 - SUNDAY, 8/15: Hi League Retreat (Grades 10/11/12)
THURSDAY, 8/19 - SUNDAY, 8/22: Family Camp
THURSDAY, 8/26 - SUNDAY, 8/29: Thursday/MO Friends (Members only)
Senior Weekend, Young Marrieds, and Fall Weekend Camp are still to be determined.

LIFE & GROWTH

NOV 16 - DEC 16

BAPTISMS

Quinn Frances Elder
son of Traci and Justin
Zoe Athena Fahey
daughter of Mary and Michael
Madeline Esther Ler
daughter of Tricia and Stasha
Nolan Anton Ler
son of Tricia and Stasha
Benjamin Steven Olson
son of Sarah and Tyler
Colin Douglas Olson
son of Sarah and Tyler
William Michael Prochaska
son of Maren and Ryan
Clay Thomas Singerhouse
son of Noelle and Jay
Wesley John Stuckey
son of Kelsey and Charlie
Ava Mary Thayer
daughter of Anna and Rustan
Evelyn Rita Thayer
daughter of Anna and Rustan

WEDDINGS

Hannah Weber & Kyle Johnson,
November 21

DEATHS

LeRoy M. Anderson
1924 - 2020
Leonard Brooks
1926 - 2020
Ernestine E. Dullum
1927 - 2020
Anna M. Gagnelius
1928 - 2020
Richard E. Higgins
1934 - 2020
Peter J. Hoffman
1974 - 2020
Bruce K. Hoyt
1932 - 2020
Dick Johnson
1932 - 2020
Joanne S. Johnson
1933 - 2020
Steven M. Klein
1951 - 2020
Gertrude Niemi
1923 - 2020
Eileen E. Olson
1924 - 2020
James K. Olson
1927 - 2020
Kenneth W. Page
1949 - 2020
Dean H. Sheller
1946 - 2020



DAILY READINGS

FROM PASTOR KALLAND JANUARY 2021

- 1 Philippians 4:6-7, Anxious About Anything?
- 2 Psalm 55:22, Cast Your Cares
- 3 Mark 6:50, Take Heart
- 4 Deuteronomy 31:6, Strong and Bold
- 5 Psalm 46:1-3, Refuge and Strength
- 6 Psalm 118:5-9, Lord On My Side
- 7 Proverbs 29:25, Secure
- 8 Mark 4:39-40, Calms Storms
- 9 Zephaniah 3:17, In Our Midst
- 10 Mark 5:36, Believe
- 11 Matthew 28:20, With You Always
- 12 1 Peter 3:13-15, Sanctify Christ
- 13 2 Timothy 1:7, Love And Self-discipline
- 14 Psalm 56:3, When Afraid
- 15 1 John 4:18-19, No Fear In Love
- 16 Proverbs 12:25, A Good Word
- 17 Joshua 1:9, With You Wherever You
- 18 Romans 8:38-39, Nothing
- 19 Revelation 1:17, First and Last
- 20 John 14:27, Untroubled Heart
- 21 Isaiah 41:10, God Helps Us
- 22 Acts 18:9-10, I Am With You
- 23 Matthew 1:18-21, He Will Save Us
- 24 Jeremiah 46:27, Don't Be Dismayed
- 25 Genesis 15:1, In A Vision
- 26 Genesis 21:15-18, What Troubles You?
- 27 2 Kings 6:15-17, What Shall We Do?
- 28 Psalm 23, Thou Art With Me
- 29 1 Chronicles 28:20, The Lord God Is With You
- 30 Exodus 20:18-21, We Will Listen
- 31 Exodus 14:10-14, Keep Still

DEVOTION

Who were the Magi? We know very little about these figures from Matthew 2. There's nothing in the text to even confirm that there were in fact three "Wise Men," or that they were men at all! In September, we celebrated the birth of our third child. We named him Casper, in part after one of the Magi, who are named (according to tradition only and not scripture) Casper, Balthasar, and Melchior. These characters are obviously important to us. But why? They are obscure and fleeting. They never return to the story. For me, they matter in large part precisely because we have no idea who they are. They're nobodies. Matthew, of all the Gospels, takes great care to establish the Jewishness of Jesus. Matthew opens not with John the Baptist preparing us for Jesus's birth (as in Mark), or an assertion of the reliability of the chronicle that follows (Luke), or grand theological poetry that identifies the coming baby Jesus as the Word that has always been and through which all things were made (John). No, Matthew opens with a genealogy. A family tree that roots Jesus squarely in the lineage of the chosen people's patriarchs and kings. And then appear these random, mysterious...outsiders. From elsewhere. And Jesus is for them, too. Jesus is for the world. — PASTOR DIXON



PRACTICING DISCIPLESHIP!

Matthew's story of the magi introduces us to key dimensions of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. **This includes joy, gratitude, worship, and generosity.** To make it easier to incorporate these important elements of discipleship into our lives, here is a weekly guide of suggested practices.

SUNDAYS – worship with your fellow Mount Olivet members online.

MONDAYS – serve others generously by making a donation at our Greet & Give donation drives, volunteer somewhere, or make a gift to the church or some other worthy charitable organization.

TUESDAYS – email, text, or call someone to tell them what you are grateful for about them.

WEDNESDAYS – increase your sense of joy by listening to Mount Olivet's musical devotion.

THURSDAYS – pray that you might notice God's blessings and be moved to respond in worship and generosity. Then look to see how God is answering your prayer.

FRIDAYS – write down, or just name aloud, three things for which you are grateful.

SATURDAYS – review the past week and name something that gave you joy. Share that joy by telling someone else about it.

UPCOMING EVENTS CONFERENCE & RETREAT CENTER

To learn more and register for these events visit mtolivet.org or contact Mandie Siems at msiems@mocrc.org, 952.469.2175.



FEBRUARY 14

OUTDOOR MARDI GRAS FESTIVAL

2-5pm. Come join the fun with Mount Olivet staff and pastors at our first Mardi Gras Festival. Dress up, enjoy good food, collect as many beads as you can, make your own masks, and more!



FEBRUARY 19

CRAFTY LADIES WEEKEND

2/19-2/21, \$250. Experienced and beginner crafters are invited to a weekend of full of (socially distant) self-care and creativity. We provide the beautiful space and you bring your craft projects!



FEBRUARY 23

SAVE THE DATE: DAY LENTEN JOURNEY

Lent is a season of reflection, repentance, and repair. Learn how you can meaningfully journey through Lent this year. Will be offered in-person or virtually. Details to come!



FEBRUARY 26

BACK TO BASICS RETREAT

2/26-2/27, \$145. Find serenity in the natural beauty of the Retreat Center as you continue on your journey of wholeness and wellbeing by cultivating a deeper understanding of the 12 Steps of AA.

LIVING WELL, LEADING WELL

A five-part monthly series of virtual workshops promoting wholeness, wellbeing, and renewal in our personal and professional lives. Each workshop will be taught by specialists in the areas of counseling, biblical studies, peace-making, and pastoral ministry. See below for details about the first two topics in this series.



JANUARY 30

CHOOSING JOY: A VIRTUAL MINI-RETREAT FOR WOMEN

9-11am. Join Pastor Monica Hammersten, Pastor Becca Freeman and Rev. Dr. Theresa Latini for a time of connection, discussion, and prayer. Together we will explore how to choose and cultivate joy.



FEBRUARY 11

CULTIVATING WISDOM

6:30-8:30pm. Join Old Testament Professor Carol Bechtel from Western Theological Seminary (Holland, MI) for an exploration of biblical wisdom and its relevance in our lives today.

GOSPEL OF MATTHEW BIBLE STUDY

The Gospel of Matthew holds a prime place in the understanding of the story of God in Christ. Its text will serve as Mount Olivet's scripture readings in worship beginning after Christmas and going through Easter. In this four-video series, you'll dig deeper into some of the theological and literary themes and examples important to Matthew that are also helpful to gaining deeper insight into the purpose and person of Jesus. Videos will be emailed to registered participants:

- 1/19 : *Introduction* with Pastor Lose
- 1/26: *Matthew's Community* with Pastor Dixon
- 2/2: *Law and Righteousness* with Pastor Ruud
- 2/9: *Emmanuel, God with Us* with Rev. Dr. Theresa Latini

WOMEN'S BOOK DISCUSSION

Join Pastor Freeman and Katie Stevenson to discuss *Miss Benson's Beetles* by Rachel Joyce. "An uplifting, irresistible novel about two women on a life-changing adventure, where they must risk everything, break all the rules, and discover their best selves-together." ~ goodreads.com

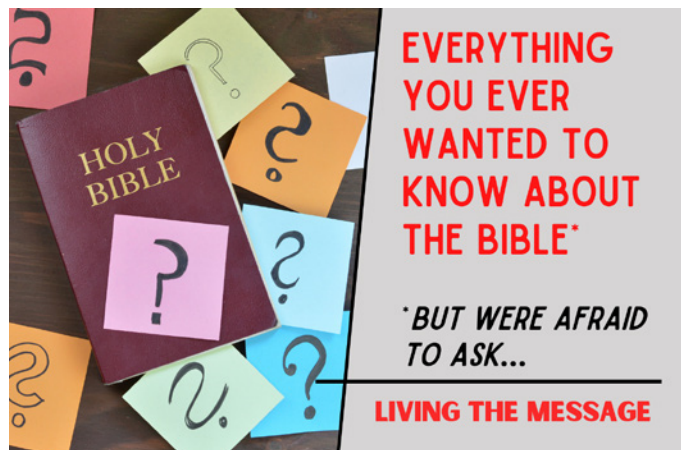
We will meet 10:30-11:30am via Zoom for four Wednesdays: 1/27, 2/3, 2/10 and 2/17.

EVENING BOOK DISCUSSION

This group meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7pm. Currently the group is meeting via Zoom and is facilitated by Mary Slinde, Mount Olivet member. New members are always welcome. The only requirement is that one loves to read!

Upcoming books:

- 1/13: *Nickel Boys* by Colson Whitehead
- 2/10: *American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummins
- 3/10: *Night Watchman* by Louise Erdrich
- 4/14: *Women of Troublesome Creek* by Kim Michele
- 5/12: *Have you Seen Luis Valdez* by Catherine Ryan Hyde
- 6/ 9: *Dutch House* by Ann Patchet



JANUARY QUESTION: WHO WROTE THE BIBLE?

It's a question many have probably wondered or asked at some point or another but have also probably not received or done much to dig into the answer. The truth is that many people over a number of centuries were the authors of what is now known as the Bible. Whether or not the writers were aware they were composing pieces which would one day come to be known as Holy Scripture is a related question. After all, how, when, and by what method or means did all of these writings become compiled and deemed worthy? Were there other writings which didn't make the cut? And how was God involved? Was it as if an angel was hovering over the authors, guiding their quills on the parchment as God dictated, or more random works which eventually stuck around as meaningful? How does it all matter for how we read the Bible today and gain faith, meaning, and insight?

We'll touch on all of these questions and more in this month's session of "Everything you Always Wanted to Know about the Bible...but Were Afraid to Ask!" Join us!

— PASTOR RUUD

It's not too late to join this year-long monthly series!

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES AVAILABLE ONLINE

Adult education videos are now available to watch and explore online. Learn what the Bible has to say about hell (spoiler: not much!)... come to know and understand one of the most written about Kings in the Old Testament (flawed, but faithful!)... and catch up (and then perhaps join!) the Living the Message series and be challenged to ask questions (faithfully and honestly). Check them all out at mtolivet.org/education!

Register for all offerings at mtolivet.org/education. Questions? Contact Katie Stevenson, katies@mtolivet.org or 612.767.2232.

Mount Olivet Blood Drive

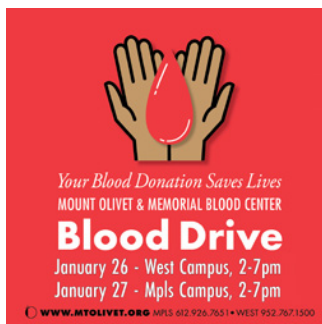
Tuesday, 1/26, 2-7pm, West Campus &
Wednesday, 1/27, 2-7pm, Mpls Campus

Every day, blood donors save lives; from accident and burn victims, heart surgery and organ transplant patients to premature babies and those battling chronic illness. The need for blood is constant, in fact, every two seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood. There is no substitute for human blood, it can only come from volunteer donors. Whole blood can be donated every 56 days. Please consider a donation and encourage others to do the same. Mount Olivet Lutheran Church is pleased to support this vital effort by hosting drives in January during National Blood Donor Month.

These drives will be facilitated/managed by Memorial Blood Centers. Donations will be collected in their free standing "bloodmobiles" in our parking lots. Social distancing will be observed and masks will be required in and outside of the mobile during the drive.

Reserve your appointment by visiting mtolivet.org or call Memorial Blood Centers 1.888.448.3253. Please use the following site codes if you are registering online, West Code: 3345, Mpls Code: 0313.

We hope to see you there and thank you for giving the gift of life! If you have questions, please contact Andrea Brown by email at andreab@mtolivet.org or call 612.767.2209.



Mediterranean Diet

I don't know about you, but these days, some things feel out of my personal control. In these times, let's remember we ARE in control of the food we choose to eat! Perhaps you have heard of the Mediterranean Diet? This way of eating is based on the traditional cuisine of countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. It consists primarily of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, nuts and seeds, and olive oil. While there are many diets out there claiming to be "healthiest," scientific studies have consistently demonstrated positive impacts on heart health and immunity associated with Mediterranean eating.

- Eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Opt for whole grains.
- Use healthy fats. Try olive oil as a replacement for butter when cooking.
- Eat more seafood.
- Reduce red meat.
- Enjoy some dairy. Eat low-fat Greek or plain yogurt and small amounts of a variety of cheeses.
- Spice it up. Herbs and spices boost flavor and lessen the need for salt.

SARAH PRESCHER, Registered Nurse

Facts in this article were sources from hopkinsmedicine.org

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

The Pastoral Care Team is looking for drivers in the months of January, February, and March to drop off meals to people in need. This could be a weekly or monthly commitment. If interested please contact Julie Goodman at julieg@mtolivet.org or 612.767.2208.

FRIENDS CONNECT

During this time of physical distancing, some of us may be experiencing increased feelings of loneliness or isolation. If you would like to receive a friendly phone call from a volunteer or know someone who would like to receive a call, please leave a message with the individual's name and number at 612.767.2210 and we will be happy to coordinate. Be advised this is a call of friendship, by a volunteer. If there are mental health concerns we would suggest a call to the Mount Olivet Counseling Center 612.927.7335 ext. 10.

PASTORAL CARE RESOURCES

If you or a loved one are hospitalized, please contact Andrea Brown 612.767.2209, Julie Goodman 612.767.2208, or Ann LaBree 612.767.2288.

If you need to reach a Pastor for emergencies including eminent deaths, hospitalizations, support after office hours please call the on-call phone at 612.916.9016.

Mount Olivet's Prayer Ministry team provides prayer support to those in need of prayer. In order to submit a prayer request, please call 612.767.2300

WELCOME MOLLY PACH, OUR NEW OFFICE MANAGER!

Molly has come on board as the new welcoming 'first contact' of the Counseling Service. She comes to us with a background in office management and theatre, and lives in Minneapolis with her husband and daughter. She is ready to answer your incoming emails/calls and schedule your appointments! She can be reached at: mpach@mtolivetcounseling.org or 612.927.7335, ext. 10



THE FIRST YEARS WITHOUT THEM

**Wednesday, 1/6 through
3/10, 3-4:30pm, via Zoom.
10 Sessions \$100.**

Come find healing in the first years following the death of a loved one. Sara Watne, MA, LPCC, leads this online group which uses film clips, poetry, contemplative practices and discussion to encourage participants along their path of mourning and reconciliation. To register, contact Molly at 612.927.7335, or mpach@mtolivetcounseling.org.

Strengthening Relationships in 2021!

This year, why not resolve to strengthen the important relationships in your life? The quality of close relationships and communal coping, can affect mental and physical health and combat isolation. Intentionality in sharing problems and joys, so that we don't feel alone in facing our issues, is especially important as it has been harder to gather physically in these past months.



Do you need to brush up on your supportive/connective skills? Feeling and giving support are universal needs. Be bold and brave in reaching out and both providing and seeking support. Try confirming to your people explicitly how they are important to you, asking for the support you need, and how you might support them. This applies to the many relationships you may have:

Marriages and intimate relationships can be enriched by noticing the positives as well as working through conflicts. This can be a difficult, but gratifying process. Often couples end up feeling closer when they reach the other side of the issue.

Family life benefits from the opportunity for each member to pause and consider their lives. Try inviting each person to say what their favorite thing about the old year was, as well as what one burden they might be able to leave behind. How might you be helpful to one another in this?

Sibling bonds are relationships worth investing in—they will be the longest relationships you will ever have. Reaching out to connect in a meaningful or brand new way will have long lasting benefits.

Friendships deserve attention, and are crucial for our health and well-being. Try thinking of a memory that makes you laugh, and text or email it to your friend. It's pretty great to have an unexpected laugh that provides nostalgia and connection.

Your relationship with God and religious faith can improve mental health by offering community, rituals that are grounding and meaningful, teachings to live by, and a sense of connection bigger than yourself. Consider a daily devotional or conversation that strengthens this tie.

You! Don't forget to offer appreciation to yourself for all of the things you've done right this year. You're surviving a pandemic, after all! Forgive yourself for the times you may feel you have fallen short, and let them go. From that place of self-acceptance, say thanks for the miracles in your life, and open yourself to giving and receiving more in the coming year.

Looking back on this list, who is it time to touch base with?

SHANNON HIMANGO, MA, LMFT, Director, Mount Olivet Counseling Service
To schedule a telehealth counseling appointment, contact Molly at mpach@mtolivetcounseling.org, or 612.927.7335.

UPCOMING EVENTS YOUTH MINISTRY

To register for these events, please contact Anna St. Dennis astdennis@mtolivet.org, 612.767.2279 or Annie Moynihan amoynihan@mtolivet.org, 612.767.2211.



CONFIRMATION

1/6: 7th Graders Zoom
1/13: 8th Graders Zoom
1/20: 7th Graders Zoom
1/27: 8th Graders Zoom



COF

1/11: 6-7PM
Charades/Pictionary Night
We'll be playing many exciting rounds of charades and Pictionary over Zoom!



AGP

Our next meeting is **2/1** for a virtual Talent Show! We will be creating a video for the residents of the Mount Olivet Nursing Home.



MO UNITED

1/12: 6-7PM Karaoke Night
Join us for a night of singing, laughter, and memories you will never forget!



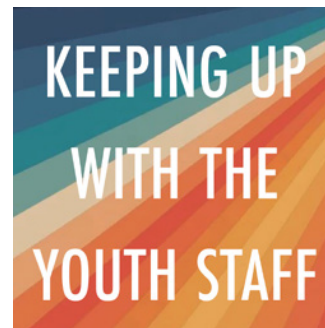
HI-LEAGUE

1/12 & 1/26, Zoom 5-5:30pm, Youth Staff Chats.
1/17, Zoom 7-8pm, Bible Study w/ Pastor Lose. **1/19**, Mpls Youth Office 5-5:30pm, After School Hi-League Group.
1/31, Zoom 7-8pm, Creation Meditation with Pastor Hammersten.



JHA

1/18: MLK Day Virtual Scavenger Hunt 12-1pm. Spend the day off of school hanging virtually with Anna!



INSTAGRAM

Check us out [@mtolivet_youth](https://www.instagram.com/mtolivet_youth/)! We post silly videos, devos written by your church friends, and more. Give us a follow and join the fun!



WEEKLY DEVO

The first of our Winter Devos will be sent out January 12th. The theme is music and songs that have impacted your life.

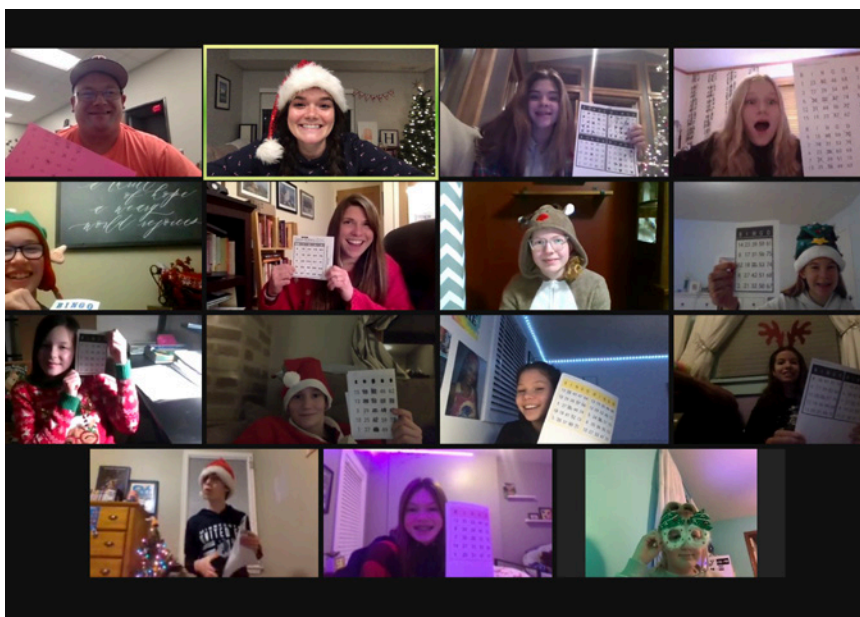
CREATION MEDITATION

"In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day." — Genesis 1:1-5

There is something about winter that slows us down and gives the opportunity to reset. As I think about the last year I am moved to the feeling of how lucky I truly am. I have seen people come together, be there for each other, and love each other. I have seen how beautiful nature can be, and look with wonder at the sunrise, stars, water, rocks, trees, flowers, and the rest of God's creation. Through these experiences I have been able to learn more about myself and my faith in God.

For me, when the holidays are over I am sad and want that Christmas feeling to last all through the year. The last few years I have looked to our Hi-League Creation Meditation as a natural reset for the coming year. The peace of hearing the story of God's creation and the reminder of seeing each moment as a gift is a blessing I feel at this service. As a Youth Staff we look forward to sharing that moment with all of you High School Students at our Creation Meditation on Sunday, January 31.

— **Geoff Arenson, Director of Youth Ministry**



2020: *A Time of Creativity*

2020 was the strangest year ever! Enough said.

A lot of aspects of our lives have changed, whether it be the way that we see our friends or families, how we work, learn in school, grocery shop, etc. If you would have told me a year ago that the primary way that I see people is through Zoom, I would've thought, "What is this 'Zoom'? What in the world are you talking about?" Now the phrase, "I'm Zooming with so and so later" is a part of our daily vernacular. Never in my life would I imagine that Confirmation, Adopt-a-Grandparent, MO United, Circle of Friends, Hi-League Board, Hi-League, and work meetings would take place at my dining room table!

Although many things were different in 2020, one thing that hasn't changed is the fact that we all have the ability to continue to connect with each other. Even though it may be over a computer screen, that doesn't change the fact that our relationships still continue to grow together.

One of my favorite Zooms thus far has been with Circle of Friends. I'm thrilled that even in a pandemic, so many people still want to make COF a part of their lives. It's always a highlight of my week to see all of the faces pop up on my computer screen right as the night gets started! So far, we've had show and tell, Christmas Bingo, and my personal favorite, a virtual scavenger hunt. It has been such a joy to see everyone after being apart for so long!

Although all of this isn't exactly what I had planned for 2020, I'm happy with the ways we've been able to still connect virtually when seeing each other in person isn't necessarily an option. We've learned a lot this past year, and I'm so looking forward to 2021 because we can take what we've learned and bring it with us into the new year. 2020 is over and I can't wait to see all the good things that 2021 will bring!

ANNIE MOYNIHAN, Coordinator of Senior High Youth

PHOTO CAPTION

Youth on a Zoom during the Christmas Themed BINGO party for Service project Adopt-A-Grandparent



Christmas For All 2020 Thank You!

Although planning events isn't a new part of my role at Mount Olivet, I experience varying levels of stress and anxious energy in the preparation work beforehand. Christmas for All – in 2020 – was no exception! The time for email communication coincided with the move many schools around the metro were making from in-person to distance learning. I know (from firsthand experience) when managing work and school from home especially during times of transition, emails and details can easily be missed.

Would people come? Were emails read? Would we be able to pull this off? The questions swirled. When the donation drop-off events began, any inkling of anxiety I had was quickly replaced with feelings of overwhelming gratitude. The amount of gifts and cheer willing to be shared with others made Christmas for All one of the most gratifying projects of the year!

In a matter of days, we transformed the West Fellowship Hall with tables and tables of wonderful gifts for people of all ages. Mount Olivet was able to provide a wonderful shopping experience for Love, INC clients, provide countless gifts for the Southside Family Nurturing Center Christmas Store, and give nearly 100 gift cards to support those at Redeemer Lutheran Church.

We look forward to future Christmas for All events when we can include more volunteers in the joyful work of preparing the store, and seeing firsthand the incredible generosity of our congregation at Christmastime. Until then, thank you, thank you, thank you!

KATY MICHALETZ, *Director of Children & Family Ministry*



PHOTOS CLOCKWISE

Christmas for All Store 2020; Santa & Pastor Hammersten; Mount Olivet Staff: Laurie Hancer, Katy Michaletz & Pastor Freeman.



SUMMER PROGRAMS 2021

We can't imagine another summer without seeing you! Please look for more information to come about dates and registration for Vacation Bible School, God's Kids Sing, and Mount Olivet Day Camp. We plan to have opportunities for campers, counselors, and volunteers alike!

UPCOMING EVENTS

To register, contact Katy Michaletz at kmichaletz@mtolivet.org or 612.767.2245 to register.

OPEN GYM – MPLS CAMPUS

New dates/times are available for Open Gym – register online. Due to the popularity of gym time, please be sure to contact Katy Michaletz with any cancellations so we can offer the time to others!

OPEN ART STUDIO – MPLS CAMPUS

New dates/times are available online! We hope you enjoy the variety of activities available, and thank you for keeping the space tidy for the next family to use the space.

MOSOM OBSERVATIONS



"MOSOM has been a fabulous place for my daughter and me to learn music. The caliber and friendliness of the teachers has been outstanding. My daughter has loved her flute teacher and learned so much from her. And while my daughter was taking her lesson, I started taking voice lessons. My teacher totally puts me at ease and has helped me greatly improve my vocal skills. Furthermore, I have been impressed that switching to remote lessons has been no problem for us. We meet online each week and still maintain the growth in music that we had before. I would highly recommend Mount Olivet School of Music to anyone."

— **Alice O'Hara, MOSOM student and parent**



"Teaching in the Mount Olivet School of Music provides many benefits to private instructors: camaraderie, business support, and recruiting to name a few. But the benefit I've enjoyed the most is the students! These families search for high quality instruction for their learners and are supportive and eager to grow in their musical journeys."

— **Miriam Jensen, teacher and assistant organist**



Music Opportunities at Mount Olivet

Do you love making music? Do you miss group ensembles like choir, band, or orchestra? Are you interested in private lessons? If so, the Mount Olivet School of Music (MOSOM) is ready to help you along your musical journey with online individual music lessons!

During these times of uncertainty and social distancing, the Mount Olivet School of Music has maintained its high-caliber music lessons by going virtual. Each week, over 300 students participate in individual online music lessons with our 30 fantastic instructors, who offer exceptional training in piano, voice, guitar, violin, viola, cello, trumpet, trombone, flute, clarinet, oboe, saxophone, recorder, folk instruments, and acting. Our teachers are dedicated pedagogues and professional musicians frequently seen on Sunday mornings and holiday orchestras at Mount Olivet.

We have received wonderful feedback from teachers, students, and parents about the amazing conveniences these online lessons have provided during these times. Online lessons allow everyone the opportunity of studying with our exceptional teachers without the travel. Students receive outstanding individual instruction from the convenience of their own homes, cabins, and backyards. This provides great possibilities to students that they may not have had in the past. It also provides MOSOM with new abilities to connect with students beyond our church walls, which furthers our mission of enhancing communities through music education.

We often turn to music in difficult times, so MOSOM is honored to be a resource for so many families to maintain the music, the consistency, and the hope. As Martin Luther said, "My heart, which is so full of overflowing, has often been solaced and refreshed by music when sick and weary."

Registration is now open for our spring semester and MOSOM is ready for you to begin your musical journey today! After all, it is never too early or too late to start making music. Come and join us! Contact us at mosom@mtolivet.org to register for lessons.

DR. LUKE RANDALL, *Coordinator of Mount Olivet School of Music*



We Are Most Grateful

Mount Olivet plays a significant role in our family's life. Our reasons vary, but we all agree it is a special place that offers all of us a profound sense of togetherness, tradition and love – and is something we support without hesitation. One of our favorite ministries is the music program – more specifically the Cathedral Choir. Beyond the world-class musical instruction, it is amazing to watch high-schoolers march down the aisle and lead the congregation in worship. Every. Sunday. Morning. Dr. Claflin has a unique ability to connect with those young adults, build their individual confidence, and walk with them in their faith journey. For that we are most grateful.



Like all of you, we have been missing in-person worship and after-worship fellowship this past year. We typically worship as an extended family and look forward to worshipping together. We are so delighted at how creatively the staff pivoted to bring many of our favorite Mount Olivet moments to us in new ways. Now, instead of rushing out the door on Sunday morning to sneak into the front pew just before the Cathedral Choir starts processing, we joke about which service we're going to attend together (it's usually an afternoon service!). From Sunday worship, to confirmation Zooms, to supporting thousands of families through Community Meals, to Keeping up with the Youth Staff videos and the Christmas Festival of Lights drive-through in the Minneapolis parking lot during Advent – Mount Olivet has done an incredible job of providing opportunities to stay connected during this time. For that we are most grateful.

As a lifelong member, I have hundreds of memories and lifelong friendships that stem from this community of faith. Being able to share in these traditions and make new ones as a family is a true gift.

JENNIFER BASTIAN, *Mount Olivet member*

PHOTOS TOP TO BOTTOM

Bastian and Slinde Cousins 2019 Christmas Concert

Bastian Family at COP Summer 2020

**PLEASE
CONSIDER
MAKING
A GIFT TO
MOUNT
OLIVET**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
GENEROSITY!**

WAYS TO GIVE

Give Online: *with your credit card or bank information by visiting mtolivet.org/online-giving. Scroll until you see the "Give Online Now" button.*

Realm Connect App: *login using your Realm username and password and click "Giving."*

Text to Give: *text "MTOLIVET" to 73256 and follow the instructions provided.*

Contact Us: *we are here to help! Contact Tricia Lerohl-Morgan in our finance office at 612.767.2255 or by email at tricial@mtolivet.org.*

Donor-Advised Funds & Charitable IRA Rollover: *Contact Mari Carlson, Director of Development, at 612.821.3150 or by email at mcarlson@mtolivethomes.org.*

Stocks: *Contact Deanne Nelson in the finance office at 612.767.2280 or by email at deannen@mtolivet.org.*

THANK YOU MOUNT OLIVET!

A couple weeks ago a mother came through the Community Meal to receive dinners for her family. Through her tears she was able to tell me that Mount Olivet is light to her family's darkness right now. She didn't know what her family would do without these meals. I am so incredibly grateful for the generosity of our members and for all the ways you have given during these difficult times. We are truly a light for so many of our neighbors in the many ways you have contributed to our community partners at record levels this year! Our Greet & Give donation drives with food, personal care items and warm clothing have filled our large donation van. The Thanksgiving hunger offering, Thanksgiving Food Drive, MOCW Annual Mitten Drive, and Christmas For All donations were significantly higher this year. We shared Christmas gifts with families in need from Love, INC at the West Campus, Southside Family Nurturing Center, and Redeemer Lutheran Church in North Minneapolis. Through the Community Meals we are serving almost 1,800 meals weekly and were able to serve over 775 Thanksgiving dinners. Mount Olivet asked and our servant congregation answered. I am so thankful Mount Olivet, for you and the gifts you share as we, together, live out the Gospel together "loving our neighbors."

— PASTOR MACLEAN



Mount Olivet Community Meals

Mount Olivet Church may be very quiet these days, but Tuesdays and Thursdays between 5:15 and 6:15, the parking lot is full of activity for our Community Dinner.

March 12, 2020, looked like our last dinner, due to COVID-19. Knowing there were so many relying on our dinners, we scrambled to change the meals to curbside grab-and-go. By the following Thursday, 100 meals were passed out curbside. The need was growing - more cars, more families, more meals. People who had never been in a food line before found the need to feed their families, and by May we knew a second dinner was needed.

In August we provided 1200 meals per week, and by November, the number was near 1800. The car line is long, beginning at 3:15. Tuesdays and Thursdays have a great welcoming feel. The Pastoral Care team, pastors, and staff work the car line. Parking lot attendants direct cars through the lot. We know the names and situations of many guests. Whether due to food insecurity, wanting to avoid grocery stores, or not needing to cook, all are welcome. The cold weather has moved our dinner line inside, with runners taking the bags to the cars. We are also working with Pastoral Care to deliver meals to guests who take the bus or walk up for their meals.

Sometimes it takes a village, and the Community Meals are one of those situations. We distributed 775 individual meals on Thanksgiving, with many new guests, showing a possible increase in weekly need. As the nightly meal count reaches 1000, we are blessed with staff volunteers to pick up food donations, assemble bag lunches, and work the dinner line. Donations of paper grocery bags with handles and financial donations are still needed and appreciated. Thank you to all who contribute to Community Meals!

SALLY McNAMEE, *Director of Culinary Services*

PHOTO CAPTION

Kitchen Staff: Rodney Nelson, Mike Nelson, Kristi Grall, & Sally McNamee



5025 KNOX AVENUE SOUTH • MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55419-1095

PERIODICALS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TWIN CITIES, MN

Mount Olivet Messenger

USPS 365-500

Published monthly by

Mount Olivet Lutheran Church

5025 Knox Avenue South

Minneapolis, MN 55419-1095

Periodicals postage paid at

St. Paul, MN

POSTMASTER

Send address changes to

Mount Olivet Messenger

5025 Knox Avenue South

Minneapolis, MN 55419-1095



MOUNT OLIVET SPIRIT STORE

**ONLINE ORDERING
IS AVAILABLE!**

Visit mtolivet.org to purchase.

Questions?

Contact Kris Ericksen at kris@mtolivet.org or 612.767.2207